

# LE DOSSIER DU TERRORISME ISRAÉLIEN

Une corruption morale

# THE ISRAELI TERRORISM FILE

A Moral Corruption

**MOSHE SHARETT**

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**AND ONE OF THE MURDERERS  
OF COUNT BERNADOTTE**

[Français & English]

**GGB REPRINTS**

2003

><http://ggb.0catch.com><

Première édition / First edition

## DOSSIER SUR LE TERRORISME ISRAÉLIEN FILE ON ISRAELI TERRORISM

**Israel must** invent dangers, and to do this it must adopt the method of provocation-and-revenge... And above all – let us hope for a new war with the Arab countries, so that we may finally get rid of our troubles and acquire our space. Moshe Dayan, 26 may 1955. (Moshe Sharett's *Diary*, p. 1021.)

### CONTENU / CONTENTS

Ce dossier est en construction. File under construction

A la fin octobre 2003, il comprend:

End of October 2003 it includes

Au début était le terrorisme, de Ronald Bleier (trad. du suivant) p. 3

In the Begining There Was Terror, by Ronald Bleier, p. 13

Un compte rendu de lecture du livre de Stephen Green (en anglais), p. 24

*Taking Sides: America's Secret Relations With A Militant Israel*

A Review of the above title p. 24

Une stratégie pour Israël dans les années 1980 par Oded Yinon (trad. fr. du suivant), p. 25.

The Zionist Plan for the Middle East, by Oded Yinon, (1982) with a preface by Israel Shahak., p. 31

How they Murdered the UN Envoy Count Bernadotte, by one of the killers, p. 44

Israel's sacred terrorism, by Livia Rokach, introduction by Noam Chomsky. (anglais) + an article by Uri Avneri, p. 51

# Au début était le terrorisme

Ronald Bleier

Une bonne part de l'histoire du terrorisme du Moyen-Orient actuel a été jetée dans le puits de la mémoire d'Orwell, en raison d'une campagne très efficace au cours des 50 dernières années pour supprimer les informations préjudiciables à Israël. Faire sauter un bus, un train, un bateau, un café ou un hôtel, assassiner un diplomate ou un négociateur de paix, tuer des otages, envoyer des colis piégés, massacrer des villageois sans défense, c'est, comme on le sait, du terrorisme. Dans le Moyen-Orient moderne, ça a commencé par les sionistes qui fondèrent l'Etat juif (1).

## **Le péché originel**

Le péché originel d'Israël est le sionisme, l'idéologie pour laquelle un Etat juif doit remplacer la Palestine précédente. A la racine du problème se trouve l'exclusivisme sioniste par lequel seuls les juifs sont traités comme citoyens de première classe. Pour créer et consolider un Etat juif en 1948, les sionistes ont expulsé 750.000 Palestiniens de chez eux et n'ont jamais permis à eux ni à leurs descendants de revenir. De plus, les forces israéliennes ont détruit plus de 400 villages et perpétré près de trois douzaines de massacres. En 1967, les Israéliens ont forcé 350.000 Palestiniens à fuir la Cisjordanie et Gaza, et 147.000 Syriens à partir des hauteurs du Golan. Depuis 1967, Israël a mis la population entière des territoires sous occupation militaire. Les effets de la dépossession des Palestiniens et d'autres Arabes nous suivent, avec les vies détruites de millions de gens directement touchés, et aussi comme signe de la guerre de l'occident contre la nation arabe entière et les musulmans partout. On peut avancer que le péché originel du sionisme et ses effets sur les peuples du Moyen-Orient ont été au centre de la motivation derrière les événements du 11 septembre, dont la conséquence la plus importante a été la " guerre contre le terrorisme " en cours qui étouffe notre paysage politique.

## **Assassinat d'un négociateur de paix**

Un des actes les plus notoires du terrorisme israélien a eu lieu en 1948 quand des forces juives, membres de la faction LEHI (aussi connue comme Gang Stern) assassinèrent le comte Suédois Folk Bernadotte, médiateur appointé par l'ONU. Bernadotte fut tué le 17 septembre 1948, un jour après qu'il eut présenté son second plan de médiation qui, entre autres choses, demandait le rapatriement et des dédommagements pour les réfugiés palestiniens. L'assassinat de Bernadotte souligna une des principales différences de politique à l'époque entre les USA et Israël, c'est-à-dire le sort des réfugiés palestiniens. A l'époque, les forces juives/israéliennes avaient déjà forcé plus d'un demi-million de Palestiniens hors de chez eux. Le tollé international qui en suivit attira l'attention sur les effets sur la paix au Moyen-Orient autant que sur les souffrances des réfugiés. De plus, le devenir de centaines de milliers de juifs vivant dans le monde arabe, surtout en Irak, au Maroc, au Yémen et en Egypte, était mis en danger par la politique d'expulsion israélienne.

La veille de l'assassinat, le ministre des Affaires Etrangères Moshe Sharett accusa publiquement Bernadotte d'un " parti-pris contre l'Etat d'Israël et pour les Etats arabes ". Stephen Green indique les preuves montrant que le gouvernement israélien lui-même fut directement impliqué dans l'assassinat. La nuit de l'assassinat, les consulats tchécoslovaques de Jérusalem et de Haïfa étaient occupés à préparer les quelque 30 visas pour les membres du groupe Stern " qui avaient été arrêtés pour leur implication dans la préparation ou l'exécution " de l'assassinat. " Entre les 18 et 29 septembre, la plupart sinon tous les 30 quittèrent Israël sur des vols pour Prague. " L'" échelle, la précision, et la vitesse de la fuite-évacuation " conduisit le Département d'Etat à " suspecter que le Gang Stern n'était pas seul impliqué ". Les USA se demandèrent si " l'opération avait pu être planifiée de Tchécoslovaquie, et si un escadron spécialement entraîné avait volé de Prague en Israël dans ce but " (2). De plus, l'historien Howard Sachar note que " On pense en général que Yehoshua Cohen, un ami de Ben Gourion, a servi de détonateur " (3).

Huit mois plus tard, en mai 1949, les Israéliens ont révélé à l'ONU que la majorité des membres du groupe Stern arrêtés pendant la " purge " avaient été libérés avant quinze jours. Les non-libérés furent gardés jusqu'à une amnistie générale accordée le 14 février 1949 (4). Personne n'a jamais été jugé pour le meurtre. L'assassinat de Bernadotte fit les titres internationaux et pendant quelques temps on fit plus attention à la question des réfugiés palestiniens. Finalement la pression pour les rapatrier ne put jamais être assemblée. On peut dire que du point de vue de la politique d'expulsion israélienne, l'assassinat fut un succès puisqu'aucun

des successeurs de Bernadotte ne fut capable de mettre suffisamment de pression sur les Israéliens pour les amener à des concessions. Si Bernadotte avait survécu, il aurait peut être réussi là où d'autres avaient échoué. Au minimum, son meurtre fut un avertissement pour tous ceux qui auraient été tentés de suivre son modèle d'action.

### **Dynamitage d'un édifice public**

Un des exemples les plus notoires du terrorisme juif/sioniste dans la période 1945-48 fut le dynamitage de l'hôtel King David le 22 juillet 1946. L'attaque fut le produit d'une atmosphère où les sionistes étaient furieux de voir que l'éclatante victoire des travaillistes britanniques à l'été 45 n'avait conduit à aucune libéralisation de la politique du gouvernement précédent sur l'immigration juive. L'insistance britannique sur le maintien de sa politique restrictive d'immigration produisit l'unification des trois factions des forces combattantes juives dans une résistance unifiée. Les trois forces comprenaient la Haganah de l'Agence juive menée par David Ben Gourion, le LEHI, ou gang Stern mené par Nathan Yellin-Mor, et l'Irgoun dirigé par Menachem Begin, qui dans son livre " La révolte " se vantait d'être le " terroriste numéro 1 ". A la fin d'octobre 1945, ils acceptèrent formellement de coopérer sur " une lutte militaire contre le pouvoir britannique " (5). Leurs actions coordonnées, dont la " nuit des trains ", la " nuit des aéroports ", la " nuit des ponts " et d'autres opérations, furent de tels succès qu'elles causèrent finalement de puissantes représailles britanniques. Immédiatement après la " nuit des ponts " du 17 juin 1947, des troupes de terroristes furent menées, des arrestations faites et des juifs furent tués ou blessés lors d'affrontements. Une opération britannique beaucoup plus importante, qui fut connue sous le nom de " Sabbat Noir " commença deux semaines plus tard. Des milliers de juifs furent arrêtés. Les troupes britanniques mirent à sac les bureaux de l'Agence juive à Jérusalem, s'emparèrent de documents importants, arrêtaient des dirigeants de la direction de l'Agence juive, et conduisirent des fouilles et des arrestations dans de nombreux kibboutz. En résultat direct de l'opération Black Sabbath, le commandement de la Haganah décida le 1<sup>er</sup> juillet de conduire trois opérations contre les Britanniques. La Palmach (forces d'élite de la Haganah) ferait un raid sur un camp de l'armée britannique pour s'emparer de ses armes. L'Irgoun ferait sauter l'hôtel King David où se situaient les bureaux du gouvernement mandataire et du commandement militaire britannique (la tâche du LEHI, faire sauter l'immeuble proche des David Brothers, ne fut pas réalisée).

Un appel de Chaim Weizmann, le président de l'Organisation Sioniste Mondiale, arriva à ce moment là, demandant l'arrêt de la lutte armée contre les Britanniques. En conséquence, le comité politique suprême décida " d'accéder à la demande de Weizmann ". Cependant, Moshe Sneh, chargé de liaison de la Haganah avec l'Irgoun et le LEHI, s'opposa fermement à la demande de Weizmann et n'informa pas Begin de la résolution du comité, lui demandant seulement de reporter l'action (6). L'hôtel King David fut détruit par 50 kilos d'explosifs placés contre les piliers porteurs du restaurant " La Régence " de l'hôtel. Les minuteurs furent calés sur 30 minutes. Après la fuite des poseurs de bombes, des appels téléphoniques furent envoyés au standardiste de l'hôtel et au *Palestine Post*. Le consulat français situé près de l'hôtel fut averti d'ouvrir ses fenêtres pour empêcher l'effet de souffle, ce qu'il fit (7). Quelque 25 minutes plus tard, une terrible explosion détruisit toute l'aile sud de l'hôtel – les 7 étages. Les pertes officielles furent de 91 morts; 28 Britanniques, 41 Arabes, 17 juifs, et 5 autres.

### **Les carnets Sharett**

La biographie de Moshe Sharett indique qu'il fut chef du département politique de l'Agence juive (1933-48), premier Ministre des Affaires Etrangères d'Israël (1948-56), et son second Premier Ministre (1954-55). Après sa mort, son fils édita son journal personnel couvrant la période d'octobre 1953 à novembre 1957. Le journal fut publié, en hébreu seulement, en 1979. Il aurait sans doute reçu peu d'attention hors d'Israël sans Livia Rokach. Fille d'Israël Rokach, le ministre de l'Intérieur dans le gouvernement du Premier Ministre Moshe Sharett, Livia Rokach partit ensuite pour Rome, où elle s'identifia plus tard comme une " écrivaine italienne d'origine palestinienne ". Au début des années 80, elle traduisit des extraits du journal de Sharett et les mit dans un livre intitulé *Le Terrorisme sacré d'Israël: Une étude basée sur le journal personnel de Moshe Sharett et sur d'autres documents*. En dépit de menaces juridiques du ministère des Affaires Etrangères d'Israël, le livre fut publié aux USA par l'Association des Diplômés Arabes des Universités Américaines (AAUG). Israël ne saisit pas la justice, craignant que, selon les mots d'Uri Avnery, " stopper la diffusion de la brochure serait une erreur de premier ordre, car cela lui donnerait plus de publicité " (8). Dans son livre, Rokach dit que depuis les premiers jours de l'Etat, Israël utilise froidement et cyniquement sa puissance militaire sous la bannière de la sécurité pour dominer la région. Elle explique que les leaders israéliens étaient mécontents des frontières de l'armistice de 1949, malgré le fait que, grâce à la guerre de 1948, ils avaient augmenté le territoire israélien de 56% attribués par l'ONU pour Israël à 78% de la Palestine mandataire. Le gouvernement israélien comprenait qu'il lui fallait transformer le jeune Etat en une puissance régionale afin de conquérir le reste de la Palestine et aussi des territoires de ses voisins arabes. Rokach déduit du Journal de Moshe Sharett que les directions politiques israéliennes ne crurent jamais sérieusement à une menace arabe sur l'existence d'Israël. Elle écrit qu'Israël tenta délibérément de pousser les Etats arabes à des confrontations et des guerres pour dominer le Moyen-Orient. De telles ambitions ne pouvaient pas être réalisées sur la base de la doctrine princeps de la " supériorité morale juive " et " présupposait inévitablement

l'emploi de la violence ouverte à grande échelle ". D'après Rokach, " le terrorisme et la violence devaient maintenant être glorifiés comme les nouvelles valeurs morales... et même sacrées, de la société israélienne ". Une telle transformation de la société israélienne ne pouvait pas être réalisée automatiquement, mais nécessitait le temps d'une génération de peur et d'anxiété de sa population et de ses supporters. Ils comprenaient aussi que les vies des victimes juives devaient être sacrifiées pour créer des provocations justifiant des représailles ultérieures... Une propagande, un bourrage de crane quotidien, contrôlé par la censure, a été commanditée pour nourrir la population Israélienne d'images de la monstruosité de l'Ennemi (9).

Fin 1953, le Premier Ministre Ben Gourion décida de prendre un congé sabbatique de deux ans. Son retrait du gouvernement fut présenté comme un " exercice spirituel " mais Rokach soutient qu'il fut pris pour des raisons stratégiques. Sharett le " modéré " allait remplacer Ben Gourion pour que l'Ouest ne s'alarme pas des intentions d'Israël. " A court terme l'intention d'Israël était de ralentir les négociations entre les Etats arabes poussant à être armés, et l'Ouest qui rechignait à les armer ". Le moment de la période sabbatique de Ben Gourion indique que déjà quatre ans après la guerre de 48-49, l'appareil sécuritaire se focalisait sur une stratégie de déstabilisation régionale. Son mode opératoire était la politique militaire connue sous le faux nom de " représailles ". La clé de la politique sécuritaire était de provoquer des conflits et des tensions dans la région, pour déstabiliser les régimes arabes et démontrer qu'ils ne pouvaient pas protéger leurs citoyens des attaques israéliennes, et pour poser les jalons d'une guerre générale (10).

### **Massacre de villageois.**

L'affaire bien connue de Kibya est un cas de documentation par Sharett des " représailles " israéliennes. Dans la nuit du 12 octobre 1953, une grenade fut jetée dans une colonie juive à l'est de Tel Aviv, tuant une femme et deux enfants. Ben Gourion et d'autres planifièrent de puissantes représailles contre un village jordanien d'où il fut décidé que venait l'attaque. Sharett se prononça contre le raid. Le 14 octobre 1953 il écrit: " J'ai dit à [Pinchas] Lavon [un supporter ardent de la politique de représailles, ministre de la défense peu après] que ceci [l'attaque] sera une grave erreur, et j'ai rappelé, en citant divers précédents, que la preuve n'a jamais été établie que des actions de représailles servent leur but déclaré. Lavon sourit... et resta sur son idée... Ben Gourion, dit-il, est de mon point de vue " (11). Deux nuits plus tard, l'Unité 101 d'Ariel Sharon tua 60 personnes dans le village jordanien frontalier de Kibya. Sharett entendit rapporter que: " trente maisons ont été démolies dans un village. Cette représaille est sans précédent par ses dimensions et la puissance offensive utilisée. J'ai marché de long en large dans ma pièce, désespéré et profondément déprimé par mon sentiment d'impuissance... J'étais simplement horrifié par la description par Radio Ramallah de la destruction du village arabe. Des dizaines de maisons rasées jusqu'au sol et des dizaines de gens tués. Je peux imaginer la tempête qui va souffler sur les capitales arabes et occidentales demain " (15 octobre 1953). " Je dois souligner que quand je me suis opposé à l'action je ne suspectais même pas un tel bain de sang. Je croyais m'opposer à une de ces actions qui étaient devenues routinières dans le passé. Si j'avais suspecté même de loin un tel massacre, j'aurais vraiment déclenché l'enfer " (16 octobre 1953).

### **Bombe dans un bus public**

En plus de la politique de représailles israélienne contre les Arabes, Rokach consacre un chapitre à de possibles opérations " faux drapeaux " ou " propagande noire " par Israël, où ses propres citoyens juifs furent délibérément sacrifiés. Dans son chapitre " Terrorisme sacré ", Rokach détaille un incident de mars 1954 au cours duquel des assaillants tuèrent dix passagers d'un bus entre Eilat et Beersheva au croisement Ma'aleh Ha'akrabim. Quatre passagers survécurent. A ce jour les circonstances de l'attaque restent enveloppées de mystère. Qui étaient les attaquants? Rokach écrit que la version israélienne était " trop étrange " pour que des observateurs la croient, notant que: " Le colonel Hutcheson, président américain de la commission mixte d'armistice jordano-israélienne, ne la prenait pas au sérieux. Résumant l'enquête de la commission, le colonel Hutcheson annonça en fait officiellement que " d'après les témoignages des survivants, il n'est pas prouvé que tous les assassins étaient arabes ". Les détails de l'opération étaient si peu clairs que même la presse américaine fit mention de la version jordanienne " d'après laquelle le massacre de Ma'aleh Ha'akrabim fut commis par les Israéliens ". Quoique en public comme en privé, Sharett avait du mal à croire la version jordanienne, Rokach spécule que " au fond de son coeur ", Sharett a sans doute eu ses " doutes inavoués ". (12)

Malgré le fait que Sharett soit parvenu à empêcher de fortes représailles pour le massacre du bus par les militaires israéliens, un prétexte fut bientôt trouvé pour lancer une attaque massive sur le village de Nahalin, près de Bethléem, tuant des douzaines de civils, et " détruisant complètement " un autre village palestinien en Cisjordanie. Les pays arabes voisins " étaient persuadés que l'escalade d'incidents auto-provoqués, de terrorisme et de représailles signifiait qu'Israël préparait le terrain pour la guerre. Ils prirent par conséquent de fortes mesures pour empêcher toute infiltration en Israël ". Le général Israélien Moshe Dayan dit à un ami journaliste en 1954 que " la situation aux frontières est meilleure que depuis longtemps et en fait est assez satisfaisante ". Mais des frontières tranquilles ne firent que stimuler davanatge les incursions israéliennes et Rokach explique comment les militaires adoptèrent de nouvelles tactiques, avec des petites patrouilles pour saboter et tuer dans les villages arabes, pour lesquelles l'infâme Unité 101 d'Ariel Sharon

joua un rôle décisif (13). Aujourd'hui avec Ariel Sharon comme Premier Ministre, la même dynamique d'emploi du terrorisme par Israël pour des gains politiques se répète sans honte. Comme Rachel Corrie, la volontaire américaine récemment morte écrasée par un bulldozer israélien à Gaza disait dans une lettre à ses parents: " La stratégie de Sharon, d'assassinat en période de négociation de paix / et de saisie de terres, fonctionne très bien maintenant pour créer de nouvelles colonies partout [et] élimine lentement mais sûrement toute possibilité sensée d'auto-détermination palestinienne " (14).

### **Faire sauter les biens britanniques, américains et égyptiens**

Un des plans de " faux drapeau " les plus significatifs historiquement, documenté par Sharett, est l'infâme Affaire Lavon, qui fut une des quelques opérations de ce genre que le gouvernement israélien fut forcé de reconnaître. En juin 1954, une dizaine de juifs égyptiens sous le commandement d'agents israéliens placèrent des bombes dans des propriétés britanniques et américaines, et des édifices publics égyptiens du Caire et d'Alexandrie. Le réseau d'espions fut attrapé et détruit le 27 juillet, quand un d'entre eux fut pris après qu'une bombe ait explosé dans sa poche à Alexandrie. Il y eut un procès et deux des accusés furent condamnés à mort et exécutés, tandis que les trois commandants israéliens s'échappaient et qu'un quatrième se suicidait. Un scandale s'ensuivit en Israël qui porta sur qui avait exactement ordonné l'opération. En 1954-55, Sharett anticipa les découvertes de la commission qui détermina finalement que le Chef d'Etat Major Moshe Dayan, le Directeur Général du Ministère de la Défense Shimon Peres, et le Colonel chef du Renseignement Benjamin Givli étaient les coupables. Sharett confiait à son journal le 10 janvier 1955: " [Les gens] me demandent si je suis convaincu qu'il [le Ministre de la Défense Pinchas Lavon] a donné l'ordre?... mais admettons que Givli ait agi sans instructions... la responsabilité n'en tombe t-elle pas moins sur Lavon, qui a constamment prêché pour des actes de folie et appris à la direction de l'armée la leçon diabolique sur comment mettre le feu au Moyen-Orient, comment causer des frictions, des confrontations armées, saboter des cibles... [et susciter] des actes désespérés et suicidaires ".

Au moment des poseurs de bombes, les négociations étaient au plus haut entre Le Caire et Londres pour l'évacuation de la zone du Canal, et entre Le Caire et Washington pour des fournitures d'armes et d'autres aides en relation avec une possible alliance Egypto-Américaine. Stephen Green présente une vision encore plus cynique de hauts dirigeants israéliens qui débutèrent l'opération terroriste pour saboter les négociations en cours et en bonne voie entre le Premier Ministre Sharett et le président égyptien Gamal Abdel Nasser (15). De nos jours, la tactique israélienne de provoquer des attaques palestiniennes en assassinant des militants de haut rang constitue une méthode standard et même routinière pour sacrifier les Israéliens sur l'autel de la politique. Un exemple de ce genre fut si clair qu'un grand journaliste israélien prédit les pertes israéliennes qui seraient dues à un " assassinat ciblé ". Le 23 novembre 2001, les Israéliens assassinèrent Mahmud Abu Hunud, un haut dirigeant du Hamas. Deux jours plus tard, le journaliste israélien Alex Fishman, dans un article à la une, expliqua qu'avant l'assassinat de Hunud il existait un accord mutuel " secret " entre le Hamas et l'Autorité Palestinienne en vertu duquel " le Hamas éviterait dans le proche futur " les attentats suicide en Israël. Comme l'écrivait Fishman: " Ceux qui ont décidé de la liquidation d'Abu Hunud savaient d'avance " que l'accord avec le Hamas serait " mis en miettes...Le sujet fut discuté intensément tant aux niveaux militaires que politiques " (16). Précisément comme Fishman l'avait prédit, le Hamas frappa en retour et moins d'une semaine plus tard, les 1<sup>er</sup> et 2 décembre, des attentats suicide à Jérusalem et Haïfa tuèrent 25 Israéliens. L'effet de ce cycle de violence fut évidemment de faire monter les tensions et d'affaiblir considérablement les tendances en Israël et aux USA pour des négociations de paix. " Le terrorisme sacré d'Israël " de Rokach fournit une documentation non disponible auparavant à propos des préparatifs israéliens pour l'attaque surprise par Israël, la France et la Grande Bretagne contre l'Egypte. Au cours de cette opération, les alliés conquièrent le canal de Suez, le Sinaï et la bande de Gaza. L'invasion combinée se produisit à un moment où les USA cherchaient à stabiliser la région. Mais l'intérêt israélien était exactement inverse. Il était d'exacerber les tensions et de rendre difficile ou impossible pour l'Egypte d'acquiescer les armes dont elle avait besoin pour éloigner Israël de la guerre.

Un raid massif contre un camp de l'armée égyptienne à Gaza, " l'incident le plus sanglant entre l'Egypte et Israël depuis la guerre de 1948 ", constitua un incident important sur la voie de la guerre d'octobre 1956. Le raid eut lieu un an et demi avant, dans une période " de relative tranquillité suivant le durcissement des mesures répressives décidées par l'administration égyptienne dans la bande [de Gaza] ". Dans la nuit du 28 février 1955, les Israéliens envoyèrent 50 paras qui tuèrent 39 Egyptiens et en blessèrent 30 autres. Sharett approuva l'opération mais fut " choqué " par la perte de vies, comme il l'écrivit le 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1955. " Le nombre (de victimes égyptiennes)... ne change pas seulement les dimensions de l'opération mais sa substance même, il le transforme en un événement susceptible de causer de graves complications politiques et militaires et des dangers... Le porte-parole de l'armée, sur instruction du Ministre de la Défense, a donné une version fautive à la presse... qui nous croira ? ". On reconnaît généralement que le raid de Gaza causa un changement décisif des relations de Nasser avec Israël. Depuis ce moment-là, le président égyptien saisit chaque occasion pour expliquer aux diplomates en visite que l'attaque " fut un moment de vérité " où il " perçut enfin les dimensions du problème israélien ", et il décida rapidement de se tourner vers les Soviétiques pour avoir des armes pour défendre son pays (18).

A la suite du raid de Gaza, Sharett donna pour instruction à ses ambassades de passer à l'offensive malgré ce qu'il savait sur les origines de l'attaque. Il espérait contrer l' " impression générale que, alors que nous nous lamentons sur notre isolement et les dangers à notre sécurité, nous débutons l'agression et nous nous montrons assoiffés de sang et désireux de perpétrer des massacres de masse " (19). Sharett s'inquiétait beaucoup de la pression des USA pour réduire les tensions dans la région. Il comprenait, comme on le voit dans ses notes du 12 mars 1955, que les USA interprétaient le raid de Gaza comme " signalant une décision de notre part d'attaquer sur tous les fronts. Les Américains... ont peur que ceci mène à une nouvelle conflagration au Moyen-Orient, qui détruira tous leurs plans. Par conséquent ils veulent de notre part un engagement clair que ce genre d'actions ne se répétera pas ". Mais Ben Gourion était sorti récemment de sa retraite pour entrer dans le gouvernement Sharett comme Ministre de la Défense, précisément pour empêcher Israël de s'engager à cesser de telles représailles. Et de fait, dans les jours suivant son retour au gouvernement, Ben Gourion proposa qu'Israël aille occuper la bande de Gaza contrôlée par l'Egypte, cette fois-ci pour de bon, proposition que Sharett parvint à écarter. Mais les Israéliens ne donneraient pas leur accord à une initiative américaine de pacte de sécurité parce que, comme Sharett l'écrivit: " Nous l'avons pas besoin [a dit Dayan] d'un pacte de sécurité avec les USA...un tel pacte ne serait qu'un obstacle pour nous....Le pacte de sécurité nous liera les mains et nous privera de la liberté d'action dont nous avons besoin dans les années à venir. Les actions de représailles que nous ne pourrions pas faire si nous étions liés par un pacte de sécurité sont notre lymphe vitale... elles nous permettent de maintenir un niveau de tension élevé dans notre population et dans l'armée " (20). Sharett indique les implications des vues de Dayan avec ses propres mots dans ses notes du 26 mai 1955: " Et avant tout espérons une nouvelle guerre avec les pays arabes, pour que nous puissions finalement nous débarrasser de nos problèmes et acquérir notre espace " (Quel dérapage verbal: Ben Gourion lui-même a dit que ça vaudrait la peine de payer un million de livres à un Arabe pour déclencher une guerre).

En plus de créer des tensions, Israël espérait isoler le régime de Nasser et l'empêcher d'obtenir des armes et d'autres aides de l'Occident. Le programme de sanctions israélien réussit si bien qu' " après des années de contacts et de négociations ", l'Egypte ne reçut rien de plus qu' " un cadeau personnel au Général Neguib sous la forme d'un pistolet d'apparat à porter aux cérémonies " (21). A la fin, un président Eisenhower enragé, qui n'était pas tenu au courant des plans tripartites pour faire la guerre à l'Egypte, força les alliés à stopper l'attaque et finalement à se retirer de la quasi totalité des territoires conquis. L'action d'Eisenhower fit clairement entendre qu'il comprenait que les intérêts américains se trouvaient dans un Moyen-Orient stable et un Israël confiné dans ses frontières de 1949 (22). Par son immense popularité, Eisenhower fut largement capable de résister aux pressions faites par le lobby juif sur le Congrès et l'exécutif. Sa relative indépendance fut virtuellement le dernier exemple de ce genre dans l'histoire américaine.

### **Contrôler le Liban**

L'intérêt des leaders sionistes pour le Liban remonte à novembre 1918, quand ils indiquèrent aux officiels du mandat britannique qu'ils souhaitaient que la frontière nord d'Israël inclue la totalité de la rivière Litani, qui coule actuellement au Liban. Leur proposition soulignait " l'importance vitale de contrôler toutes les ressources en eau jusqu'à leur sources " (23). Cependant, à la conférence de paix de 1919, les Français exigèrent et gagnèrent la bataille pour les frontières actuelles du Liban qui incluaient la longueur complète de la rivière Litani et les bassins des rivières Hasbani et Wazzani. Jamais réconciliés avec cet accord, le premier gouvernement israélien et les suivants commencèrent à élaborer des plans pour créer un Etat fantoche au Liban. Le " Journal " de Sharett relate une rencontre du 27 février 1954 entre Ben Gourion, Sharett, le Ministre de la Défense Pinchas Lavon et Dayan où Ben Gourion argumenta que " c'est le moment de pousser le Liban, c'est à dire les Maronites de ce pays, à proclamer un Etat Chrétien ". Quand Sharett rétorqua que les Chrétiens du Liban étaient " faibles " et pas en situation de fomenter une révolution, Ben Gurion rugit: " Nous devrions envoyer des émissaires et de l'argent ". Quand Sharett répondit qu'il n'y avait pas d'argent, la réponse de Ben Gourion fut: Il faut trouver l'argent, si ce n'est au Trésor alors à l'Agence juive! Pour un tel projet ça vaut la peine de jeter cent mille, un demi-million, un million de dollars. Quand ça se produira, un changement décisif aura lieu au Moyen-Orient, une nouvelle ère commencera " (24). Lors d'une autre rencontre sur le Liban en mai 1954, Moshe Dayan fournit un guide sur la manière de réaliser le contrôle du Liban. D'après Dayan, Israël n'avait besoin que de trouver un officier libanais " même rien qu'un major " qui servirait de fantoche et qui avec l'aide d'Israël " créerait un régime chrétien... Ensuite l'armée israélienne entrera au Liban [et] le territoire depuis le Litani jusqu'au sud sera annexé totalement à Israël et tout ira bien " (25).

Considérez ce qui s'est effectivement passé plus tard, pendant les années 60, 70 et 80: en 1967, la guerre d'Israël contre trois Etats arabes n'a pas seulement donné à Israël la possession de la Palestine orientale (Cisjordanie), de Gaza, du Sinaï et des Hauteurs du Golan, elle a permis aussi à Israël de capturer les sources du Jourdain et de la Bania. En plus, Israël a détruit le canal jordanien d'East Ghor et son barrage Khaled sur la rivière Yarmouk, qui coule dans le bassin Nahariva d'Israël. Dans l' " Opération Litani " de 1978, Israël établit un contrôle ferme sur la rivière Wazzani, qui coule dans le Jourdain, et sur la presque totalité de la rivière Hasbani. Et au cours de l'opération de 1982 " Paix en Galilée ", la totalité de la rivière Litani passa sous contrôle israélien (26). Pour les premiers gouvernements israéliens, le Liban passait pour une cible

évidente, en partie à cause de ses ressources importantes en eau, et en partie parce qu'il semblait politiquement plus faible que les autres pays arabes. Mais les plans pour le Liban durent être retardés jusqu'après 1967. Rokach l'explique bien pour les années 60: Israël dépendait de la France pour ses fournitures d'armes et n'aurait pas pu agir ouvertement contre les vœux français. La fin de la guerre coloniale française contre l'Algérie et l'impatience croissante de de Gaulle vis à vis de l'arrogance d'Israël conduisit à la fin de la relation spéciale franco-israélienne en 1967, et à son remplacement par la relation exclusive USA-Israël (27).

La guerre civile libanaise (1975-1990) coûta près de 100.000 vies et détruisit un gouvernement séculier vital et une société civile qui se remet encore difficilement du massacre. Les chrétiens furent mis aux prises avec des Libanais musulmans, et la situation fut encore compliquée par la présence de 350.000 Palestiniens et par l'OLP (28). La contribution israélienne à la guerre fut massive. Les attaques israéliennes sur le Liban débutèrent dès 1968 et continuèrent en 1982 et après. " Avant que l'armée libanaise se désintègre en 1976, elle avait indiqué un taux de 1,4 violations israéliennes du territoire libanais par jour dans la période 1968-74 " (29). D'après l'auteur Rosemary Sayigh, de telles " attaques continuèrent d'escalader et furent un facteur majeur du déclenchement de la guerre civile de 1975/76 ". Le correspondant du *Guardian* Irène Beeson rapporta que " plus de 150 villages et villes du Sud Liban... ont été attaqués sauvagement par les forces armées israéliennes depuis 1968 ". Elle décrit l'histoire du village de Al-Khiyam, bombardé depuis 1968. Au moment où Israël l'envahit dix ans plus tard, seuls 32 de ses 30.000 habitants restaient. " [Ils] furent massacrés de sang froid " par les forces fantoches qu'Israël avait établies au sud (30).

### Dissoudre les Etats Arabes

Le plan stratégique d'Israël de dissoudre les Etats arabes en les cassant en unités sectaires plus petites a été exposé ouvertement en 1982 par Oded Yinon, un stratège israélien. Oded évoquait la " vraie guerre civile " ayant lieu de nos jours entre la majorité sunnite et la minorité dirigeante shi'ite alaouite en Syrie. Il soulignait la rupture sunni-shi'ite en Irak: " Soixante cinq pour cent de la population n'a pas la parole en politique, où une élite de 20% détient le pouvoir ". Il fit des analyses similaires de la Jordanie, de l'Arabie saoudite, des principautés du Golfe, de l'Iran, de la Turquie et du Soudan et écrivit que la région entière " du Maroc à l'Inde et de la Somalie à la Turquie... est construite comme un château de cartes, incapable de résister à ses sévères problèmes ". Oded espérait le proche dissolution du Liban en cinq provinces, servant de précédent pour tout le Moyen-Orient, mais il notait que la dissolution de l'Irak " est encore plus importante pour nous que celle de la Syrie... En Irak, une division en provinces selon les lignes ethnico-religieuses comme en Syrie à l'époque ottomane est possible. Donc trois (ou plus) Etats existeront autour des trois villes principales: Bassorah, Bagdad et Mossoul, et les zones shi'ites du sud se sépareront du nord sunnite et kurde " (31).

Il est clair que la guerre récente des USA contre l'Irak a fait avancer les rêves israéliens d'hégémonie régionale les plus grandioses vers ce but stratégique. Du point de vue des buts israéliens, les USA ont commencé à mettre en oeuvre ce que feu Israël Shahak, auteur israélien et critique du gouvernement, appelait " le plan précis et détaillé du régime sioniste présent... pour le Moyen-Orient. [Le plan] est basé sur **la division de toute la région en petits Etats, et la dissolution de tous les Etats arabes** existants (souligné dans l'original). Shahak notait aussi " la forte liaison avec la pensée néo-conservatrice aux USA " (32). Les néoconservateurs (ou néocons), typiquement des zélotes républicains proches du Likoud israélien, reçoivent de nos jours une grande attention des médias parce qu'ils ont été installés à des postes clés dans le gouvernement de George W. Bush, et ils paraissent être la voix principale du gouvernement, modérée par intermittence par le Secrétaire d'Etat Colin Powell. De nombreux néocons actuels furent des libéraux " qui dérivèrent à droite quand le parti démocrate s'aligna sur la gauche anti-guerre à la Mc Govern. Et la préoccupation pour Israël fut très prégnante dans leur changement. Comme le dit le politologue Benjamin Ginsberg: " Un des facteurs qui les poussa inexorablement vers la droite fut leur attachement à Israël et leur frustration croissante pendant les années 60 avec un parti démocrate de plus en plus opposé à l'état d'alerte militaire américain et de plus en plus séduit par les causes de Tiers-Monde [p. ex. les droits des Palestiniens] ". Dans la ligne dure de la droite anti-communiste reaganienne, son engagement pour la puissance militaire américaine, et sa volonté d'intervenir politiquement et militairement dans les affaires des autres pays... les néocons trouvèrent un mouvement politique qui garantirait la sécurité d'Israël " (33). L'arrivée conjointe des régimes de droite du Premier Ministre Israélien Menachem Begin et du président Ronald Reagan mena à l'invasion brutale du Liban par Israël, qui fit 17.000 à 19.000 morts libanais et palestiniens, pour leur grande majorité des civils (34). Le prétexte de l'invasion fut la menace sur la sécurité d'Israël des raids frontaliers de l'OLP et des tirs d'artillerie. Mais même à ce moment là, les observateurs firent tout de suite remarquer que la frontière avait été calme depuis 14 mois grâce à un cessez le feu négocié par l'envoyé de Reagan, Philip Habib. En vérité les mois de calme mettaient les Israéliens au désespoir de trouver un prétexte pour débiter la guerre. Si la sécurité israélienne n'est pas la raison pour l'invasion par Israël, comment allons-nous l'expliquer? Encore une fois les données documentées révèlent que la campagne israélienne contre le Liban fut entreprise pour des raisons politiques et non sécuritaires.

Dans son livre sur les événements autour de l'invasion du Liban en 1982, " Le triangle fatidique ", Noam Chomsky consacre 10 pages aux " raisons de l'invasion du Liban ". Il commence par noter qu'une



raison évidente était " de disperser à nouveau les réfugiés et de détruire l'organisation qui représente le nationalisme palestinien... " D'après un haut diplomate israélien, 'L'OLP, ce sont des gens politiquement morts ". L'analyste politique Yoel Marcus écrit qu'Israël partit en guerre pour détruire " le soutien à l'OLP de la part de l'immense majorité de la population – et son statut international croissant " (35). A la fin des années 70, l'OLP s'éloignait de " la résistance armée " et commençait à gagner l'attention comme une organisation politique légitime représentant le peuple palestinien. Chomsky détaille certaines des raisons de la " panique " habituelle des Israéliens à chaque fois qu'ils sentent la " menace d'un règlement politique pacifique " qu'il serait difficile de freiner. A la suite de la campagne de bombardements israéliens de juillet 1981, un plan de paix de l'Arabie Saoudite, puis des initiatives de paix syriennes s'ensuivirent. Mais le développement le plus " inquiétant " du point de vue israélien vint de l'observance scrupuleuse du cessez-le-feu par l'OLP, malgré de nombreuses provocations israéliennes. Le succès d'Arafat à imposer la discipline aux nombreuses factions de l'OLP fut, d'après Yehoshua Porath, un spécialiste israélien renommé " une véritable catastrophe aux yeux du gouvernement israélien " car elle indiquait que l'OLP " pourrait accepter dans le futur un accord allant beaucoup plus loin ", auquel cas Israël ne pourrait plus fuir un règlement politique sur l'argument que l'OLP n'est rien d'autre qu' " un gang sauvage de meurtriers ". [Le gouvernement israélien espère que] une OLP frappée, sans base logistique ni territoriale, retournera à son ancien terrorisme... et assassinera beaucoup d'Israéliens... " (36).

### Monographie d'un cas d'intérêts divergents

La campagne de bombardements de deux semaines contre le Liban en juillet 1981, prélude à la guerre de 1982, est un cas extrême de terrorisme israélien. L'épisode est aussi un exemple instructif de la divergence entre les buts politiques d'Israël et des USA au Liban. Les USA étaient intéressés par un Liban stable pour pacifier ses alliés arabes, et pour contrecarrer le défi soviétique dans la région. En opposition directe aux objectifs politiques américains, le Premier Ministre Begin et le Ministre de la Défense Ariel Sharon étaient résolus à déstabiliser le Liban et à créer un Etat fantôme à dominance chrétienne.

La question très sensible de la double loyauté apparaît quand les politiques moyen-orientales des USA et d'Israël divergent, et quand des éléments aux USA préfèrent les intérêts israéliens aux et les mettent au dessus des intérêts américains. En fait, dans de tels cas, le terme " double loyauté " est une sorte de faux qualificatif car il tend à suggérer une attitude équilibrée alors que les partisans d'Israël aux USA préfèrent systématiquement les intérêts israéliens à ceux des USA. Le chapitre de Stephen Green sur les deux semaines de bombardement de 1981 ne soulève pas directement la question de la " double loyauté ". Néanmoins, il souligne à propos le rôle joué par le *New York Times* (et par extension le reste des médias dominants) qui contribua à une conspiration du silence en faveur des intérêts israéliens. La campagne israélienne contre le Liban commencée en 1968 fut multipliée par dix avec l'invasion de 1978 du Liban, au nom de guerre significatif " Operation Litani ", qui impliqua 25.000 soldats Israéliens, avec deux divisions motorisées et une brigade blindée. L'opération causa les morts d'un millier de Palestiniens et de Libanais (37).

En 1979 Israël annonça une nouvelle politique de sécurité " préventive " pour Israël. Israël frapperait dès lors à volonté sur les installations suspectes de l'OLP, et n'attendrait pas que des raids de l'OLP aient lieu sur le territoire israélien. Comme la violence continuait de monter, le président libanais Bashir Gemayel, en avril 1981, attira les Israéliens dans une crise en attaquant les Syriens. Après que l'aviation israélienne, comme attendu, soit venue à son aide, les Syriens installèrent des missiles antiaériens SAM-6 et des missiles balistiques SCUD dans les faubourgs de Damas. Green explique que les bombardiers israéliens avaient déjà les équipements de contre-mesure américains " qui pouvaient tromper les SAMs " et les Scuds étaient si imprécis qu'ils ne posaient aucun problème sérieux à la population israélienne ou aux installations militaires. Ceci ne dissuada pas le Premier Ministre Menachem Begin de menacer de " la destruction des missiles soviétiques ", soulevant la possibilité d'une guerre entre les grandes puissances (38). A ce moment là, la politique américaine sembla confuse et contradictoire. D'un côté le président Reagan envoya l'ambassadeur spécial Philip Habib en médiateur de la crise. De l'autre, le Secrétaire d'Etat Alexander Haig voyagea dans la région pour aviser les Israéliens d'un " changement fondamental d'attitude " qui donnait aux Israéliens une plus grande " flexibilité " pour continuer " les attaques aériennes et les assauts terrestres contre les bases de guerrilla palestiniennes sur le territoire libanais " (39).

Les Israéliens commencèrent leur grande frappe sur le Liban le 10 juillet 1981, juste après la réélection de Menachem Begin comme Premier Ministre et la nomination d'Ariel Sharon comme Ministre de la Défense. D'après l'ambassadeur américain Robert Dillon, les raids n'auraient pas pu venir à un pire moment. Son télégramme confidentiel au State Department du 16 juillet rapportait plus que des protestations contre les USA que ce n'était d'habitude quand Israël frappait le Sud Liban, peut être parce que l'ambassadeur Habib était au Liban et le conseiller du State Department Robert Mc Farlane à Tel Aviv (40). Le 16 juillet, Israël augmenta spectaculairement ses attaques, détruisant cinq ponts au Sud Liban, le camp de réfugiés Ayn al-Hilwah près de Sidon, et la raffinerie de pétrole Medreco – possédée et dirigée par les américains – à Zahrani. Le *New York Times*, dans sa couverture des faits sur les frappes du 16 juillet, ne mentionna pas la raffinerie américaine. Le jour suivant, les avions américains attaquèrent le centre-ville de Beyrouth. Green cite le rapport Dillon: " Les dommages ont été massifs. La zone Fakhani-Tariq Al-Jadidah près du camp de réfugiés de Chatila a été la plus touchée. Plusieurs immeubles ont été complètement abattus et les dégâts

rappellent la seconde guerre mondiale. Les bureaux de l'OLP qui étaient les cibles des raids étaient évidemment situés aux niveaux inférieurs des immeubles " (41).

L'ambassadeur Dillon estima que les pertes humaines pour Beyrouth seul, du 1<sup>er</sup> avril au 17 juillet 1981, furent de 438 morts et 2479 blessés. La raffinerie américaine avait été touchée une deuxième fois. Les réservoirs avaient été atteints " et la raffinerie fermée ". Les avions israéliens frappèrent chaque jour suivant jusqu'au 23 juillet avec, en priorité, des cibles d'équipement, dont des ponts, des routes, des stations d'électricité et des stations de pompage. La raffinerie américaine Medreco fut touchée à nouveau les 18 et 22, et mise hors service pendant environ deux semaines, causant des coupures de carburant et de courant à Beyrouth et au Sud Liban. Green observe: " Israël, utilisant les armes américaines, menait alors une guerre totale sur la terre et le peuple Libanais " Le *New York Times* mentionna les attaques israéliennes sur la raffinerie Medreco dans ses numéros des 19 et 23 juillet, mais sans dire que la raffinerie était possédée et exploitée par les USA. A aucun moment au cours de la volumineuse couverture des mitraillages et des bombardements du Liban en juillet 1981, la propriété américaine de la raffinerie ne fut révélée (42).

Green continue son examen de la couverture par le journal américain en relevant qu'à une époque de " critiques montantes contre Israël en Europe et aux Nations Unies ", le *Times* commença à parler des morts civiles israéliens en grand détail, sans jamais mentionner par " nom, âge ou circonstance " aucun des morts civils libanais ni des milliers de blessés. En plus, Green se demande pourquoi les Israéliens ont consacré tant de puissance de feu à détruire l'infrastructure libanaise, et ce que ceci avait à voir avec les attaques de l'OLP sur le nord de la Galilée (43). Green, en fait, répond à sa propre question quand il rapporte qu'au moment des raids israéliens, la mission de l'ambassadeur Philip Habib avait été élargie, depuis une tentative de dégonfler " la crise des missiles syro-israélienne " vers " la résolution de la guerre civile libanaise, et un Liban stable ". En même temps, il note qu'une claire intention des raids israéliens était " la déstabilisation du gouvernement et de l'économie du Liban. En cela, Israël travaillait directement contre la politique américaine déclarée " (44). Pourquoi le *New York Times* écarta-t-il délibérément ses lecteurs du savoir que la raffinerie Medreco attaquée délibérément à cinq reprises par Israël au cours des bombardements de juillet 1981 était possédée et exploitée par les américains ? Le *Times* était-il sensible aux réactions adverses qui auraient pu venir de ses lecteurs et publicitaires face à des nouvelles défavorables à Israël ? La propriété juive du *Times* et/ou son soutien au sionisme jouèrent-ils un rôle dans la suppression d'informations défavorables à Israël ? Il est peut-être impossible de résoudre de telles questions, mais l'épisode montre la complicité des médias dans le soutien à Israël et contre les intérêts plus généraux de la politique américaine, et, peut-on penser, contre les intérêts de la plupart des Américains en un Liban stable et un Moyen-Orient pacifique. Il est significatif que, un an plus tard, dans le cadre des retombées de l'invasion israélienne au Liban, le Secrétaire d'Etat Alexander Haig fut forcé de démissionner, parce qu'on considérait qu'il mettait les intérêts israéliens dans " la lutte contre le terrorisme " devant les intérêts américains pour une réduction des hostilités au Moyen-Orient.

### Une feuille de route vers ?

La démission d'Alexander Haig en 1982 est la preuve que l'irresponsabilité de l'administration Reagan de ne pas objecter aux excès israéliens avait des limites. Le gouvernement américain, à cette époque là, était suffisamment flexible et rationnel pour faire marche arrière quand nécessaire et était capable de se focaliser sur l'idée simple qu'un Moyen-Orient pacifique était dans l'intérêt de l'Amérique. De nos jours, une conscience similaire manque à l'évidence. La disparition de l'Union Soviétique comme contrepoids aux intérêts des USA au Moyen-Orient a permis au régime actuel des USA toute liberté de s'allier complètement aux mesures répressives du gouvernement Sharon et à ses pratiques brutales.

Le Premier Ministre Ariel Sharon a utilisé son adresse politique pour unifier les Israéliens derrière les restrictions dramatiques de la possibilité pour les Palestiniens de poursuivre leur vie civile. Malgré l'incarnation actuelle du " processus de paix ", nommé de manière trompeuse " feuille de route ", les Palestiniens n'ont jamais autant été menacés par la politique israélienne. Par une combinaison d'intimidation, d'utilisation efficace du lobby israélien aux USA et de servilité complète du Congrès, Ariel Sharon, par exemple, n'a pas été appelé à rendre des comptes sur le meurtre au bulldozer en mars 2003 de Rachel Corrie, citoyenne américaine, qui fut une des trois militants de la paix internationaux tués ou sévèrement blessés en un mois.

Les Palestiniens ne peuvent pas se rendre à l'école, à leur travail, ou poursuivre une vie économique normale. Ils doivent faire face aux checkpoints interminables, aux " assassinats ciblés ", aux tanks, aux tireurs d'élite, aux F-16 et aux hélicoptères Apache dans leurs villes. Un " mur de sécurité " actuellement construit dans le Cisjordanie avale des milliers d'hectares d'oliveraies, de fermes, de fabriques palestiniennes, et affecte la vie de centaines de milliers de Palestiniens dans une centaine de villages et de communautés situées entre le mur et les frontières israéliennes de 1967 ou ses environs (45) Tous ceci tandis que le monde se focalise sur la " feuille de route " que beaucoup d'observateurs considèrent comme à peine plus qu'une distraction et un stratagème de relations publiques (46).

Il semble clair que le gouvernement israélien continuera à faire tout ce qu'il peut pour empêcher le remplacement de l'infrastructure palestinienne détruite par l'armée en Cisjordanie lors de la campagne du printemps 2002. Sans reconstruction, sans économie viable, que peut apporter le futur aux Palestiniens ? Une indication de ce que les Israéliens ont en réserve pour les Palestiniens, c'est les propos sans retenue sur le

" transfert ", même par un membre du gouvernement Sharon (47). Comme Premier Ministre, Sharon sait faire mieux que d'embrasser de tels points de vue. Pourtant, en 1988, comme ministre du commerce et membre du Cabinet rapproché pendant la première Intifada, il avait prévenu qu'un soulèvement des Palestiniens " mènerait inévitablement à une guerre avec les Etats arabes et à l'expulsion nécessaire des Arabes de la Cisjordanie, de Gaza et de la Galilée " (48). Beaucoup d'observateurs ont craint que la guerre en Irak puisse faire une sorte d'écran pour l'expulsion massive de 3,5 millions et plus de Palestiniens qui vivent dans les territoires occupés. Mais Israël n'a pas été attaqué et l'avance américaine sur Baghdad a été si rapide qu'il n'y a pas eu de créneau pour des expulsions de masse. Cependant, le temps est en faveur des Israéliens et ils sont maîtres de la création et de l'exploitation des occasions. Après qu'ils aient été forcés par le président Eisenhower de rendre le Sinaï et Gaza en 1956, ils ont attendu jusqu'à ce que la scène politique soit mûre en 1967. Une fois encore le temps est en leur faveur alors que la " guerre contre le terrorisme " continue et que les politiciens américains menacent l'Iran et la Syrie, tous les deux bien placés sur la liste des ennemis d'Israël.

Les perspectives de paix semblent de plus en plus minces. Un indicateur des difficultés à venir est le commentaire de la Conseillère à la Sécurité Nationale Condoleezza Rice à Tel Aviv à la mi-mai 2003. Mme Rice a dit que " la sécurité d'Israël est la clé de la sécurité du monde ". Comme l'a dit un observateur bien placé de l'influence de l'aile droite sur la politique des USA, ceci va bien plus loin que " L'affirmation néocon selon laquelle les intérêts sécuritaires des USA et d'Israël sont identiques " (49).

#### Notes:

1. Pour l'histoire et la conquête sioniste et l'occupation, voir Norman Finkelstein, *Image and Reality of the Israel-Palestine Conflict*; pour la documentation sur les actes spécifiques de terrorisme sioniste, i.e. lettres piégées, kidnapping, bombes dans les cafés, les cinémas, les marchés, voir *Encyclopedia of the Palestine Problem*, d'Issa Nakhleh, pp. 65-230.
2. Stephen Green, *Taking Sides: America's Secret Relations With A Militant Israel*, New York: William Morrow and Co., 1984, pp. 38-40. [Compte rendu plus bas]
3. Baylis Thomas, *How Israel Was Won: a concise history of the Arab-Israeli conflict (1900-1999)*, p. 93, note 39.
4. Green, *Taking Sides*, p. 40.
5. Ecrit par le Prof. Yehuda Lapidot, sur le site de l'Irgoun:  
<<http://www.etzel.org/english/index.html>>.
6. Ainsi, d'après les versions de l'Irgoun, quand l'attaque eut lieu le 22 juillet, la Haganah avait officiellement retiré son approbation.
7. D'après l'Irgoun, après le premier appel à 12 h 10, il restait 22 minutes pour l'évacuation.
8. R. Curtiss, dans le *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*.  
<<http://www.wrmea.com/backissues/031885/850318011.html>>.
- 9-13. Livia Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, pp. 5-6, 11, 13, 13, 29 respectivement.  
<<http://aaargh-international.org/fran/livres3/rokach.pdf>>
14. Rachel Corrie, dans un courriel à sa famille, cité dans *Harper's* " This happens Every Day " [sic], juin 2003.
15. Green, *Taking sides*, pp 94-123
16. " Une liquidation dangereuse ", *Yediot Aharonot*, 25 nov. 2001.
17. Donald Neff, *Warriors at Suez: Eisenhower takes America into the Middle East*, p. 33.
18. Ehud Ya'ari, in Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, p. 62.
- 19-21: Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, pp. 39-40, 47, 47 respectivement.
22. D. Neff, *Warriors at Suez*, pp. 365-68 et 371-76.
23. Nasser Aruri, préface de *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, p. xiv.
- 24-25. Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, p. 22 et 26.
26. N. Aruri, préface de *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, pp. xiv-xv.
27. Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, p. 59, Note 6.
28. Rosemary Sayigh, dans *Too Many Enemies: The Palestinian Experience in Lebanon*, écrit que 110,000 Palestiniens furent forcés de fuir le Nord de la Palestine en 1948, et que l'OLP fut forcé de se déplacer du Liban en Jordanie en 1970-71.
- 29-30. Noam Chomsky, *The Fateful Triangle*, Southend Press, édition de 1983, p. 191.
31. Oded Yinon, "Une stratégie pour Israël dans les années 90 " publié en hébreu dans "Kivunim," février 1982, par l'Organisation Sioniste Mondiale (WZO), Jérusalem, et en anglais sous le titre "The Zionist Plan for the Middle East," par l'Association of Arab-American University Graduates, avec une préface d'Israel Shahak. Disponible à:  
[http://www.geocities.com/roundtable\\_texts/zionistplan.html](http://www.geocities.com/roundtable_texts/zionistplan.html)
- VERSION FRANÇAISE CI-DESSOUS
32. Shahak, préface de *The Zionist Plan...* Voir ci-dessous.
33. Stephen Sniegoski, "The War on Iraq: Conceived in Israel," février 2003, à: [http://www.thornwalker.com/ditch/conc\\_toc.html](http://www.thornwalker.com/ditch/conc_toc.html)
34. Pour une discussion des estimations, voir Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims*, p. 727, note 247.
- 35- 36. Chomsky, *The Fateful Triangle*, pp. 198-199 et 200 respectivement.
- 37- 38. Stephen Green, *Living by the Sword: America and Israel in the Middle East 1968-1987*, p. 155 et pp 155-156 respectivement.
39. David Shipler, *The New York Times*, 18 avril 1981, cité dans Green, *Living by the Sword*, p. 157.
40. Télégramme confidentiel du Département d'Etat du 16 juillet 1981, cité dans Green, *Living by the Sword*, p. 158.
- 41, 42, 43, 44: Green, *Living by the Sword*, pp. 161, 162, 163, 164 respectivement.
45. Neve Gordon: " Can bad fences make good neighbors ?" *Guardian Weekly*, 29 mai – 4 juin 2003.
46. Voir Jeffrey Blankfort, "AIPAC Hijacks the Roadmap: How Israel's U.S. Lobby Is Stacking the Deck," 27 mai 2003 sur la toile:  
<[counterpunch.org/blackfort05272003.html](http://counterpunch.org/blackfort05272003.html)>.
47. Benny Elon, ministre Israélien du tourisme, au *Jordan Times*, 7 février 2003: "Nous ne devons pas avoir peur de soulever à nouveau l'idée d'un transfert et de discussions ouvertes sur les diverses possibilités que cela offre ".
48. Cité dans: Ralph Schoenman, *The Hidden History of Zionism*, p. 10.

49. Stephen Sniegoski, courriel d'introduction à un article d'infos dans *Jewish Press*: "Rice : Israel's Security Is Key to World Security," 18 mai 2003  
<[http://www.jewishpress.com/news\\_article.asp?article=2380](http://www.jewishpress.com/news_article.asp?article=2380)>

[Traduit de l'anglais par JPB. Paru dans *Palestine Info*. Nous avons légèrement corrigé et allégé la traduction qui pourrait être encore améliorée. aaargh]

*The Link*, 36 (3), juillet-août 2003.

Le même texte, en version originale:

Demographic, Environmental, and Security Issues Project - DESIP

## In the Beginning, There Was Terror

by: **Ronald Bleier**

Much of the history of terrorism in today's Middle East has been thrust down the Orwellian memory hole due to the highly effective campaign over the past 50 years to suppress information prejudicial to Israel.

Blowing up a bus, a train, a ship, a café, or a hotel; assassinating a diplomat or a peace negotiator; killing hostages, sending letter bombs; massacring defenceless villagers; this is terrorism, as we know it. In the modern Middle East it began with the Zionists who founded the Jewish State. [1]

### **The Original Sin**

Israel's original sin is Zionism, the ideology that a Jewish State should replace the former Palestine. At the root of the problem is Zionism's exclusivist structure whereby only Jews are treated as first-class citizens. In order to create and consolidate a Jewish State in 1948, Zionists expelled 750,000 Palestinians from their homeland and never allowed them or their descendants to return. In addition, Israeli forces destroyed over 400 Palestinian villages and perpetrated about three dozen massacres. In 1967, the Israelis forced another 350,000 Palestinians to flee the West Bank and Gaza as well as 147,000 Syrians from the Golan Heights. Since 1967 Israel has placed the entire Palestinian population of the Territories under military occupation.

The effects of the dispossession of the Palestinians and other Arabs are with us to this day, in the shattered lives of the millions of people directly affected and also as a sign of the West's war against the entire Arab nation and Muslims everywhere. Arguably, the original sin of Zionism and its effects on the peoples of the Middle East were central to the motivation behind the events of 9/11, and the most important consequence of which is the ongoing "war on terrorism" that is smothering our political landscape.

### **Assassinating the Peace Negotiator**

One of the most notorious acts of Israeli terrorism occurred during the 1948 war when Jewish forces, members of the LEHI underground (also known as the Stern Gang) assassinated Swedish Count Folke Bernadotte, a U.N. appointed mediator. Bernadotte was killed on September 17, 1948, a day after he offered his second mediation plan which, among other things, called for repatriation and compensation for the Palestinian refugees. [ *See below the story by one of the murderers.*]

The assassination of Bernadotte highlighted one of the biggest policy differences at the time between the United States and Israel, namely the fate of the Palestinian refugees. By that time, Jewish/Israeli forces had already forced more than half a million Palestinians from their homes. The resultant international outcry focused attention on the implications for Middle East peace as well as on the suffering of the refugees. Moreover, the fate of hundreds of thousands of Jews who resided in the Arab world, mainly in Iraq, Morocco, Yemen and Egypt, was placed at risk because of Israeli expulsion policy.

The day before the assassination, Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett publicly accused Bernadotte of "bias against the state of Israel and in favour of the Arab States". Stephen Green points to evidence that the Israeli Government was itself directly involved in the killing. On the night of the assassination the Czech Consulates in Jerusalem and Haifa were busy processing some 30 visas for Stern gang members "who had been rounded up for their involvement in the planning and execution of the assassination. Between September 18 and September 29, most if not all of the 30 left Israel on flights for Prague, Czechoslovakia. The scale, precision, and speed of the evacuation-escape made the State Department suspicious that the Stern gang was not

involved alone. The U.S. wondered if the operation might have been planned and prepared in Czechoslovakia, and that a specially trained squad had been flown into Israel from Prague for that purpose. [2]

In addition, historian Howard Sachar notes that Yehoshua Cohen, a friend of Ben Gurion, is widely believed to be the triggerman. [3]

Eight months later, in May 1949, the Israelis revealed to the U.N. that the majority of the Stern Gang members rounded up in the purge had been released within two weeks. Those not released were held until a general amnesty was granted on February 14, 1949. [4]

#### **No one was ever put on trial for the killing.**

The assassination of Bernadotte made international headlines and for a time more attention was paid to the issue of the Palestinian refugees. In the end pressure to repatriate them was never successfully mustered. Arguably, from the point of view of Israeli expulsion policy, the assassination was a success since none of Bernadotte's successors was able to focus sufficient pressure on the Israelis to make any concessions. Had Bernadotte lived, he might have succeeded where others had failed. At the least, his murder was a warning to any who might have tried to follow his activist example.

#### **Dynamiting a Public Building**

One of the most notorious examples of Jewish/Zionist terrorism in the post-war period 1945-1948, was the bombing of the King David Hotel on July 22, 1946. The bombing developed out of an atmosphere where the Zionists were enraged when the British Labour Party's sweeping victory in the summer of 1945 did nothing to liberalise the previous government's policy on Jewish immigration. British insistence on maintaining their restrictive immigration policy led to the unification of the three major factions of the Jewish fighting forces into a United Resistance. The three forces comprised the Jewish Agency's Haganah led by David Ben Gurion, the LEHI, the Stern Gang led by Nathan Yellin-Mor, and the Irgun led by Menachem Begin, who in his book "The Revolt" bragged that he was "Terrorist Number One". At the end of October 1945, they formally agreed to cooperate on a military struggle against British rule. [5]

Their joint attacks, including the Night of the Trains, The Night of the Airfields, the Night of the Bridges and other operations, were so successful that they led finally to forceful British retaliation. Immediately after the Night of the Bridges, June 17, 1947, British Army searches for terrorists were conducted, arrests were made and Jews were killed and injured in clashes. A much larger British operation that came to be known as "Black Sabbath" began two weeks later. Thousands of Jews were arrested. British troops ransacked the offices of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, seized important documents, arrested members of the Jewish Agency Executive, and carried out searches and arrests in many kibbutzim.

As a direct result of the Black Sabbath operation, the Haganah command decided on July 1 to conduct three operations against the British. The Palmach (the elite Haganah strike force) would carry out a raid on a British army camp to recover their weapons. The Irgun would blow up the King David Hotel where the offices of the Mandatory Government and the British military command were located. (The LEHI task, blowing up the adjacent David Brothers building, was never carried out.)

Just at this moment came an appeal from Chaim Weizmann, President of the World Zionist Organization, urging that the armed struggle against the British be halted. As a result of his appeal, the supreme political committee decided to accede to Weizmann's request. However, Moshe Sneh, the Haganah liaison with the Irgun and LEHI, strongly opposed the Weizmann request and did not inform Begin of the committee resolution but merely asked him to postpone the action. [6]

The King David Hotel was brought down by means of 50 kilos of explosives, placed beside supporting pillars in the hotel's "La Regence restaurant". Timers were placed for 30 minutes. After the bombers made their escape, telephone messages were placed to the hotel telephone operator and to the Palestine Post. The French Consulate, adjacent to the hotel was also warned to open its windows to prevent blast damage, which it did. [7] Some 25 minutes later, a terrific explosion destroyed the entire southern wing of the hotel, all seven stories. The official death toll was 91 dead: 28 Britons, 41 Arabs, 17 Jews, and five others.

### The Sharett Diaries

Moshe Sharett's résumé included being head of the Jewish Agency's political department (1933-1948), Israel's first Foreign Minister (1948-1956), and its second Prime Minister (1954-1955). Following his death, his son edited his personal diary which covered the period from October 1953 to November 1957. The diary was published in 1979 in Hebrew only. [*Eight volumes...*] It may well have received little attention outside of Israel had it not been for Livia Rokach.

Born the daughter of Israel Rokach, the Minister of the Interior in the Government of Israeli Prime Minister Moshe Sharett, Livia Rokach later moved to Rome, where she identified herself as "an Italian writer of Palestinian origin". In the early 1980s, she translated excerpts from the Sharett diary and inserted them into a book: *Israel's Sacred Terrorism: A Study Based on Moshe Sharett's Personal Diary and Other Documents*. [See text below ] Despite legal threats from the Israeli foreign ministry, the book was published in the United States by the Association of Arab American University Graduates (AAUG). Israel never took legal action fearing that, in the words of Knesset member Uri Avneri, stopping the dissemination of the booklet would be a mistake of the first order, since this would give it much more publicity. [8]

In her book Rokach charges that from the earliest days of the state, Israel cynically and with cold calculation used its military power under the banner of security in order to dominate the region. She explains that Israel's leaders were unhappy with the 1949 armistice borders even though, as a result of the 1948 war, they increased Israeli territory from the U.N. allotment of 56% of Mandate Palestine to 78%. The Israeli Government understood that it needed to transform the fledgling state into a regional power in order to conquer the rest of Palestine as well as some of the territory of its Arab neighbours. Rokach concludes from Sharett's journal that the Israeli political establishment never seriously believed in an Arab threat to the existence of Israel. She writes that Israel deliberately attempted to drive the Arab States into confrontations and wars in order to dominate the Middle East. Such ambitions could not be achieved on the basis of the earlier Jewish moral superiority doctrine and thus inevitably presupposed the use of large scale, open violence. According to Rokach, terrorism and revenge were now to be glorified as the new moral and even sacred values of Israeli society. Such a transformation of the Israeli population could not be achieved automatically, but required a generation of fear and anxiety on the part of its population and its supporters. They also understood that the lives of Jewish victims also had to be sacrificed to create provocations justifying subsequent reprisals. A hammering, daily propaganda, controlled by the censors, was directed to feed the Israeli population with images of the monstrosity of the Enemy. [9]

In late 1953, Israeli Prime Minister Ben Gurion decided to take a two-year sabbatical during which he would withdraw from government activity. His retirement was presented as a spiritual exercise but Rokach contends that it was done for strategic reasons. The moderate Sharett was to replace Ben Gurion in order not to alarm the West about Israel's intentions. In the short range the Israeli design was aimed at slowing down the negotiations between Arab States pressing to be armed and the West which was reluctant to arm them. The timing of Ben Gurion's sabbatical indicates that already only four years after the war of 1948-49, the security establishment was contemplating a strategy for regional destabilisation. Its 'modus operandi' was to be the political military policy known under the false name of retaliation. The point of the retaliation policy was to provoke conflict and tension in the area, to destabilise the Arab Regimes by demonstrating that they could not protect their citizens from Israeli attacks, and to set the stage for general war. [10]

### Massacring Villagers

An instance of Sharett's documentation of Israeli retaliation is the notorious Kibya affair. On the night of October 12, 1953, a grenade was thrown into a Jewish settlement east of Tel Aviv, killing a woman and two children. Ben Gurion and others planned a powerful retaliatory blow against a Jordanian village from which it was determined the attack originated. Sharett argued against the raid; on October 14, 1953, he recorded: I told [Pinchas] Lavon [a staunch supporter of the retaliation policy soon to become the Minister of Defence] that this [attack] will be a grave error, and recalled, citing various precedents, that it was never proved that reprisal actions serve their declared purpose. Lavon smiled ... and kept to his own idea.... Ben Gurion, he said, didn't share my view. [11]

Two nights later, Ariel Sharon's Unit 101 killed 60 people in the Jordanian border village of Kibya. Sharett heard reports that thirty houses have been demolished in one village.

"This reprisal is unprecedented in its dimensions and in the offensive power used. I walked up and down in my room, helpless and utterly depressed by my feeling of impotence... I was simply horrified by the description in Radio Ramallah's broadcast of the destruction of the Arab Village. Tens of houses have been razed to the soil and tens of people killed. I can imagine the storm that will break out tomorrow in the Arab and Western Capitals." (15 October 1953).

"I must underline that when I opposed the action I didn't even remotely suspect such a bloodbath. I thought that I was opposing one of those actions which have become a routine in the past. Had I even remotely suspected that such a massacre was to be held, I would have raised real hell." (16 October 1953)

### **Bombing a Public Bus**

In addition to the Israeli retaliation policy against the Arabs, Rokach devotes a chapter to a possible Israeli false flag or black propaganda operations whereby its own Jewish citizens were deliberately sacrificed. In her chapter entitled "Sacred Terrorism" Rokach details an incident from March 1954 in the course of which attackers killed ten passengers on a bus from Eilat to Beersheva at the Ma'aleh Ha'akrabim crossroads. Four passengers survived. To this day the circumstances of the attack are shrouded in mystery. Who were the attackers? Rokach wrote that the Israeli cover story was too strange for outsiders to believe, noting: Colonel Hutcheson, the American chairman of the mixed Jordanian-Israeli Armistice Commission, did not take it seriously. Summing up the Commission's inquiry, Colonel Hutcheson in fact officially announced that "from the testimonies of the survivors it is not proved that all the murderers were Arabs."

The details of the operation were so unclear that even American press reports made mention of the Jordanian version according to which the Ma'aleh Ha'akrabim massacre was committed by the Israelis. Although in public and private, Sharett was reluctant to believe the Jordanian version, Rokach speculates that deep down in his heart Sharett must have had his unconfessed doubts. [12]

Although Sharett managed to block the Israeli military from forceful retaliation for the bus massacre, a pretext was soon found to launch a massive attack on the village of Nahalin, near Bethlehem, killing dozens of civilians, and completely destroying another Palestinian village in the West Bank. The neighbouring Arab countries were persuaded that the Israeli escalation of self-provoked incidents, terrorism and renewed retaliation meant that Israel was preparing the ground for war. They therefore took strong measures to prevent any infiltration into Israel. Israeli General Moshe Dayan told a journalist friend in May 1954 that "The situation along the borders is better than it has been for a long time and actually it is quite satisfactory." But quiet borders simply spurred more Israeli incursions and Rokach explains how the military adopted new tactics using small patrols for sabotage and murder in Arab villages, in which Ariel Sharon's infamous Unit 101 played a decisive role. [13]

Today with Ariel Sharon as Prime Minister, the same dynamic of Israeli use of terror for political gain repeats itself shamelessly. As Rachel Corrie, the American volunteer recently crushed to death in Gaza by an Israeli bulldozer, said in a letter home to her parents: "Sharon's assassination-during-peace negotiations/land grab strategy, is working very well now to create settlements all over [and is] slowly but surely eliminating any meaningful possibility for Palestinian self-determination." [14]

### **Bombing British, U.S., and Egyptian Property**

One of the most historically significant false flag schemes documented by Sharett is the infamous Lavon Affair which is one of the few such operations that the Israeli Government was forced to acknowledge. In July 1954, about 10 Egyptian Jews under the command of Israeli agents planted bombs in British and American properties and Egyptian public buildings in Cairo and Alexandria. The spy ring was caught and broken up on July 27, when one of its members was caught after a bomb exploded in his pocket in Alexandria.

There was a trial and two of the accused were condemned to death and executed, while the three Israeli commanders escaped and a fourth committed suicide. A scandal subsequently ensued in Israel that turned on exactly who ordered the operation. In 1954-55, Sharett anticipated the findings of the commission which ultimately established that Chief of Staff Moshe Dayan, Director General of the Ministry of Defence Shimon Peres, and Intelligence Chief Colonel Benjamin Givli were the culprits. Sharett confided to his diary on January 10, 1955:



"[People] ask me if I am convinced that he [Defence Minister Pinchas Lavon] gave the order? ... but let us assume that Givli has acted without instructions ... doesn't the moral responsibility lie all the same on Lavon, who has constantly preached for acts of madness and taught the army leadership the diabolic lesson of how to set the Middle East on fire, how to cause friction, cause bloody confrontations, sabotage targets and perform] acts of despair and suicide."

At the time of the bombings negotiations were at their height between Cairo and London for the evacuation of the Canal Zone, and between Cairo and Washington for arms supplies and other aid in connection with a possible U.S.-Egyptian alliance. Stephen Green presents an even more cynical picture of top Israeli officials who initiated the terrorist operation in order to sabotage Prime Minister Sharett's ongoing and quietly successful negotiations with Egyptian President Gamal [Abdul] Nasser. [15]

Today, a standard, even routine method of sacrificing Israelis on the altar of politics is the Israeli tactic of provoking Palestinian attacks by assassinating high profile activists. One such example was so clear that a leading Israeli journalist forecasted the Israeli casualties that would result from an Israeli targeted assassination. On November 23, 2001, the Israelis assassinated Mahmoud Abu Hunud, a top Hamas operative. Two days later, Israeli journalist Alex Fishman, in a front-page article, explained that before the assassination of Hunud there had existed a secret and unacknowledged gentlemen's agreement between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority that Hamas was to avoid in the near future suicide bombings in Israel. As Fishman wrote: "Whoever decided upon the liquidation of Abu Hunud knew in advance that the agreement with Hamas would be shattered." The subject was extensively discussed both by Israel's military echelon and its political one. [16]

Just as Fishman had predicted, Hamas soon struck back and less than a week later, on December 1 and 2, suicide bombings in Jerusalem and Haifa killed 25 Israelis. The effect of this cycle of violence was predictably to heighten tensions and to dramatically weaken the constituency in Israel and the U.S. for peace negotiations.

### **Raiding a Camp in Gaza**

Rokach's *Israel's Sacred Terrorism* provides previously unavailable documentation relating to Israel's preparations for the October 1956 surprise attack by Israel, France and Britain against Egypt. In that operation, the Allies conquered the Suez Canal, Eastern Sinai and the Gaza Strip. The combined invasion occurred at a time when the U.S. sought to stabilize the area. But the Israeli interest was precisely the opposite. It was to exacerbate tensions and make it difficult or impossible for Egypt to gain the weapons it needed to deter Israel from war.

An important incident leading up to the October 1956 war was a massive raid on an Egyptian Army Camp in Gaza, the bloodiest incident between Egypt and Israel since the 1948 war. [17]

The raid took place about a year and a half earlier in a period of relative tranquillity following the enforcement of repressive measures decided on by the Egyptian administration of the Strip. On the night of February 28, 1955, the Israelis sent in 50 paratroopers who wound up killing 39 Egyptians and wounding 30 others. Sharett approved the operation, but was shocked by the loss of life, as he wrote on March 1, 1955: The number (of Egyptian victims) changes not only the dimensions of the operation but its very substance; it turns it into an event liable to cause grave political and military complications and dangers.... The army spokesman, on instructions from the Minister of Defence, delivered a false version to the press. Who will believe us?

It is widely acknowledged that the Gaza raid was a decisive turning point in Nasser's relations with Israel. From then on, the Egyptian President took every opportunity to explain to visiting diplomats that the attack was a moment of truth when he finally perceived the dimensions of the Israeli problem and he soon decided to turn to the Soviets for arms in order to defend his country. [18]

In the aftermath of the Gaza raid, Sharett instructed his embassies to go on the offensive despite what he knew of the origins of the attack. He hoped to counter the general impression that while we cry out over our isolation and the dangers to our security, we initiate aggression and reveal ourselves as being bloodthirsty and aspiring to perpetrate mass massacres. [19]

Sharett was very much concerned about U.S. pressure to reduce tensions in the area. He understood, as seen in his March 12, 1955 entry, that the U.S. interpreted the Gaza raid as signalling a decision on our part to attack on all fronts. The Americans are afraid that it will lead to a new conflagration in the Middle East, which will blow up all their plans. Therefore they wish to obtain from us a definite commitment that similar actions

will not be repeated. However, Ben Gurion had recently emerged from retirement to rejoin Sharett's Government as Defence Minister precisely to prevent Israel from committing to discontinuing such reprisals. Indeed, within days of rejoining the Government, Ben Gurion proposed that Israel proceed to occupy the Gaza Strip, then controlled by Egypt, this time for good, a proposal that Sharett managed to defeat.

But the Israelis would not agree to a U.S. initiative of a security pact because, as Sharett wrote: We do not need [Dayan said] a security pact with the U.S.: such a pact will only constitute an obstacle for us. The security pact will only handcuff us and deny us the freedom of action which we need in the coming years. Reprisal actions which we couldn't carry out if we were tied to a security pact are our vital lymph ... they make it possible for us to maintain a high level of tension among our population and in the army. [20]

Sharett put the implications of Dayan's view into his own words in a May 26, 1955 entry: And above all let us hope for a new war with the Arab Countries, so that we may finally get rid of our troubles and acquire our space. (Such a slip of the tongue: Ben Gurion himself said that it would be worthwhile to pay an Arab a million pounds to start a war.)

In addition to creating tensions, Israel hoped to isolate the Nasser Regime and prevent him from obtaining weapons and other aid from the West. The Israeli sanctions program was so successful that after years of contacts and negotiations, Egypt received nothing more than a personal present made to General [Muhammad] Naguib [Egyptian President] in the form of a decorative pistol to wear at ceremonies. [21]

In the end, an enraged President Eisenhower, who was not informed of tripartite plans to make war on Egypt, forced the Allies to halt the attack and eventually to give up virtually all the territory they had captured. Eisenhower's actions make clear that he understood that American interests lay in a stable Middle East and an Israel confined to its 1949 borders. [22]

Immensely popular as he was, Eisenhower was largely able to shake off the pressures placed by the Jewish lobby on Congress and the Executive. His relative independence was virtually the last such example in American history.

### **Controlling Lebanon**

Zionist leaders' interest in Lebanon goes back to November 1918 when they indicated to British Mandate Officials that they wished Israel's northern border to include the whole of the Litani River, all of which currently runs in Lebanon. Their proposal emphasized the "vital importance of controlling all water resources up to their sources." [23]

At the 1919 Peace Conference, however, the French demanded and won the battle for the present boundaries of Lebanon that included the entire length of the Litani River and the headwaters of the Hasbani and Wazzani Rivers. Never reconciled to this arrangement, the first and subsequent Israeli Governments began considering plans to create a puppet state in Lebanon. Sharett's Diary records a February 27, 1954 meeting among Ben Gurion, Sharett, Defence Minister Pinchas Lavon and Dayan where Ben Gurion argued, "this is the time to push Lebanon", that is the Maronites in that country, to proclaim a Christian State. When Sharett retorted that the Christians in Lebanon were weak and in no position to foment a revolution, Ben Gurion roared: "We ought to send envoys and spend money." When Sharett replied that there was no money, Ben Gurion's answer was: "The money must be found, if not in the Treasury then at the Jewish Agency! For such a project it is worthwhile throwing away one hundred thousand, half a million, a million dollars. When this happens a decisive change will take place in the Middle East, a new era will start." [24]

In another high-level meeting on Lebanon in May 1954, Moshe Dayan provided a guide as to how control of Lebanon would be accomplished. According to Dayan, Israel needed only to find a Lebanese officer, even just a Major who would serve as a puppet and with Israel's help creates a Christian regime. Then the Israeli army will enter Lebanon [and] the territory from the Litani southward will be totally annexed to Israel and everything will be all right. [25]

To fulfil these plans, Israel had to wait nearly 15 years, but, as Prof. Naseer Arouri writes: Consider what actually happened later, during the 1960s, '70s, '80s: In 1967, Israel's war against three Arab states not only gave Israel possession of eastern Palestine (the West Bank), Gaza, the Sinai and the Syrian Golan Heights, but also enabled Israel to capture the headwaters of the Jordan and Banias rivers. In addition, Israel destroyed Jordan's East Ghor Canal and its Khaled Dam on the Yarmouk River,

which flows into Israel's Nahariva Pool. In the 1978 "Litani Operation," Israel established firm control over the Wazzani River, which flows into the Jordan, as well as almost the entire length of the Hasbani River. And in the 1982 "Operation Peace for Galilee," the entire length of the Litani River came under Israeli control. [26]

To the first Governments in Israel, Lebanon seemed an obvious early target in part for its important water resources and in part because it seemed politically weaker than the other neighbouring Arab countries. But Israeli plans for Lebanon had to be postponed until after 1967. Rokach explains that, well into the 60s: Israel was dependent on France for arms supplies and could not have acted openly against France's wishes. The end of France's colonial war against Algeria and De Gaulle's growing impatience with Israel's arrogance led to the termination of the French-Israeli special relationship in 1967, and to its substitution by the exclusive U.S.-Israel one. [27]

The Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) cost about 100,000 lives and destroyed a vital secular government and civil society that is still reeling from the onslaught. Christians were pitted against Lebanese Moslems, and the situation was further complicated by the presence of 350,000 Palestinians and the PLO. [28]

Israel's contribution to the war was massive. Israeli attacks on Lebanon began as early as 1968 and continued through 1982 and after. Before the Lebanese army disintegrated in 1976, it had given a figure of 1.4 Israeli violations of Lebanese territory per day from 1968-74. [29]

According to author Rosemary Sayegh, such attacks continued to escalate and were a major factor in bringing about the Civil War of 1975/6. London Guardian correspondent Irene Beeson reported that 150 or more towns and villages in South Lebanon have been repeatedly savaged by the Israeli armed forces since 1968. She described the history of the village of Khiyam, bombed from 1968. By the time Israel invaded ten years later, only 32 of its 30,000 inhabitants remained. [T]hey were massacred in cold blood by Lebanese proxy forces that Israel had established in the south. [30]

### Dissolving the Arab States

Israel's strategic plan to dissolve the Arab states by breaking them down into smaller sectarian units was laid out openly in a 1982 essay by Oded Yinon, an Israeli strategist. [ See below] Oded pointed to the real civil war taking place nowadays between the Sunni majority and the ruling Shi'ite Alawi minority in Syria. He emphasised the Sunni - Shi'ite split in Iraq: "Sixty five percent of the population has no say in politics, in which an elite of 20 percent holds the power. He made similar analyses of Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf principalities, Iran, Turkey, and Sudan and wrote that the entire region extending from Morocco to India and from Somalia to Turkey is built like a house of cards, unable to withstand its severe problems. Oded looked forward to Lebanon's dissolution into five provinces serving as a precedent for the entire Middle East, but he noted that Iraq's dissolution: is even more important for us than that of Syria. In Iraq, a division into provinces along ethnic/religious line as in Syria during Ottoman times is possible. So three (or more) states will exist around the three major cities: Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul, and Shi'ite areas in the south will separate from the Sunni and Kurdish north. [31]

It's clear that the recent U.S. war against Iraq has advanced a key aim of the most grandiose Israeli dreams for regional hegemony. From the point of view of Israeli goals, the U.S. has begun to implement what Israel Shahak, the late Israeli author and government critic, called the accurate and detailed plan of the present Zionist Regime for the Middle East. [The plan] **is based on the division of the whole area into small states, and the dissolution of all the existing Arab states.** (Emphasis in original.) Shahak also noted the strong connection with the Neo-Conservative thought in the USA. [32]

The neoconservatives (or neocons), typically Republican zealots close to Israel's Likud party, are getting a great deal of media attention nowadays because they have been installed in key positions in George W. Bush's government and they seem for the most part to be the voice of the Administration, intermittently moderated by Secretary of State Colin Powell. Many of today's neocons were liberals: who drifted to the right when the Democratic Party moved to the anti-war McGovernite left. And concern for Israel loomed large in their change. As political scientist Benjamin Ginsberg puts it: One major factor that drew them inexorably to the right was their attachment to Israel and their growing frustration during the 1960s with a Democratic party that was becoming increasingly opposed to American military preparedness and increasingly enamoured of

Third World causes [e.g., Palestinian rights]. In the Reaganite right's hard-line anti-communism, commitment to American military strength, and willingness to intervene politically and militarily in the affairs of other nations neocons found a political movement that would guarantee Israel's security. [33]

The twin ascendancy of the right-wing regimes of Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and President Ronald Reagan led to the brutal 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon that claimed an estimated 17,000 to 19,000 Lebanese and Palestinian lives, the great majority of whom were civilians. [34]

The pretext for the invasion was the threat to Israeli security by PLO cross-border raids and shelling. But even at the time, observers were quick to point out that the border had been quiet for eleven months due to a cease-fire negotiated by Reagan emissary Philip Habib. Indeed the months of quiet made the Israelis desperate for a pretext to begin the war. If Israeli security was not the reason for the Israeli invasion, how are we to explain it? Once again the documentary evidence reveals that the Israeli campaign against Lebanon was undertaken for political and not security purposes.

In his book on the events surrounding the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, *The Fateful Triangle*, Noam Chomsky devotes ten pages to The Reasons for the Invasion of Lebanon. He begins by noting that one obvious purpose was to disperse the refugees once again and to destroy the organisation that represents Palestinian nationalism. According to one senior Israeli diplomat, the PLO is dead people politically. Israeli political analyst Yoel Marcus wrote that Israel went to war to destroy support for the PLO on the part of the overwhelming majority of the population and its growing international status. [35]

By the late 70s, the PLO was moving away from armed resistance and beginning to gain traction as a legitimate political organisation representing the Palestinian people.

Chomsky details some of the reasons for the familiar Israeli panic whenever they perceive the threat of a peaceful political settlement that might be difficult to contain. As a consequence of the July 1981 Israeli bombing campaign, a Saudi Arabian peace plan and subsequent Syrian peace initiatives had emerged. However, the most ominous development from the Israeli point of view was that the PLO was scrupulously observing the ceasefire, despite many Israeli provocations. Arafat's success in imposing discipline on the many PLO factions, according to Yehoshua Porath, a leading Israeli scholar, constituted: a veritable catastrophe in the eyes of the Israeli government since it indicated that the PLO might agree in the future to a more far-reaching arrangement, in which case Israel could no longer evade a political settlement on the grounds that the PLO is nothing but a wild gang of murderers. [The Israeli government hopes that] a stricken PLO, lacking a logistic and territorial base, will return to its earlier terrorism and murder many Israelis. [36]

### **A Case Study in Divergent Interests**

Israel's two-week bombing campaign against Lebanon in July 1981, a prelude to the 1982 war, is an extreme case of Israeli terrorism. The episode is also an instructive example of the divergence between U.S. and Israeli policy goals in Lebanon. The U.S. was interested in a stable Lebanon in order to pacify its Arab allies, and to beat back the Soviet challenge in the region. In direct opposition to American policy objectives, Prime Minister Begin and Defence Minister Sharon were determined to destabilise Lebanon and create a puppet, Christian-led government.

The highly sensitive issue of dual loyalty arises when U.S. and Israeli Middle East policy objectives diverge and when elements in the U.S. prefer Israeli interests over and above U.S. interests. Indeed, in such cases, the term dual loyalty is something of a misnomer in that it tends to suggest a balanced approach while Israel's partisans in the U.S. invariably prefer Israel's interest over and above America's. Author Stephen Green's chapter on the two week 1981 bombing campaign does not directly raise the dual loyalty issue. Nonetheless, he pointedly highlights the role played by *The New York Times* (and by extension the rest of the major media) that contributed to a conspiracy of silence in favour of Israeli interests.

The Israeli campaign against Lebanon that began in 1968 rose by an order of magnitude with the 1978 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, significantly dubbed, Operation Litani, involving 25,000 Israeli troops, including two mechanised divisions and an armoured brigade. The operation resulted in the deaths of a thousand Palestinians and Lebanese. [37]

In 1979 Israel announced a new pre-emptive security policy for Israel: Israel would henceforth strike at will at suspected PLO facilities, and would not wait for PLO raids to

occur on Israeli territory. As the violence continued to escalate, Lebanese president Bashir Gemayel, in April 1981, manoeuvred the Israelis into a crisis by attacking the Syrians. After the Israeli Air Force predictably came to his aid, the Syrians installed SAM-6 anti-aircraft missiles and SCUD tactical ballistic missiles in the outskirts of Damascus. Author Green explains that the Israeli fighter-bombers already had U.S. supplied electronic countermeasures which could foil the SAMs and the Scuds were so inaccurate as to pose no serious threat to Israeli population centres or military installations. This did not deter Prime Minister Menachem Begin from threatening the destruction of the Soviet missiles, raising the possibility of war between the major powers. [38]

At this point U.S. policy seemed confused and contradictory. On the one hand, President Reagan sent Special Ambassador Philip Habib to mediate the crisis. On the other hand, Secretary of State Alexander Haig travelled to the region to give the Israelis notice of a basic change in attitude which allowed the Israelis greater flexibility to continue with air strikes and ground assaults against Palestinian guerrilla bases in Lebanese territory. [39]

The Israelis began to strike Lebanon in earnest on July 10, 1981, just after Menachem Begin was re-elected Prime Minister and Ariel Sharon was named Defence Minister. According to U.S. Ambassador Robert Dillon, the raids could not have come at a worse time. His confidential state department telegram of July 16 reported more of an outcry against the U.S. than was usually the case when the Israelis hit south Lebanon, perhaps because Ambassador Habib was in Lebanon and Israel, and state department counsellor Robert McFarlane was in Tel Aviv. [40]

On July 16, Israel dramatically escalated its attacks, destroying five bridges across South Lebanon, the Ayn al-Hilwah refugee camp near Sidon, and the American owned and managed Medreco oil refinery complex at Zahrani. *The New York Times*, in its coverage of the July 16 strikes, did not mention the American refinery. The next day Israeli planes carried the destruction to downtown Beirut. Green quotes from Dillon's report: The damage was massive. The Fakhani-Tariq Al-Jadidah area near the Shatila refugee camp was the hardest hit. A number of buildings were completely levelled and the devastation is reminiscent of World War II. The PLO offices that were the targets of the raids were evidently located on the lower floors of the buildings. [41]

Ambassador Dillon estimated that casualty figures for Beirut alone from April 1 to July 17, 1981 were 438 dead and 2,479 wounded. Once again the American refinery had been struck. Three storage tanks had been hit and the refinery has been shut down. Israeli planes struck every day afterwards through July 23 with infrastructure targets high on the list including bridges, highways, electrical stations, and water pumping stations. The American Medreco refinery was hit again on the 18th and on the 22nd and was put out of commission for an estimated two weeks, resulting in shortages of gasoline and oil and power shortages in Beirut and in south Lebanon. Israel using U.S. weapons was now waging total war on the land and people of Lebanon. Green observes: *The New York Times* did mention the Israeli attacks on the Medreco refinery in its coverage on July 19 and 23. Neither article, however mentioned that the refinery was U.S. owned and operated. Not once in the Times's extensive coverage of the shelling and bombing in Lebanon in July 1981 was the American ownership of the refinery revealed. [42]

Green continues his overview of coverage by the U.S.'s paper of record by pointing out that at a period of mounting criticism of Israel in Europe and at the U.N., *The Times* began covering Israeli civilian deaths in great detail while not mentioning by name, age or circumstance one of the hundreds of Lebanese civilian deaths or the thousands wounded. In addition, Green wonders why the Israelis devoted so much firepower to the destruction of Lebanese infrastructure, and what it had to do with PLO attacks on northern Galilee. [43]

Green, in effect, answers his question when he records that at the time of these Israeli raids Ambassador Philip Habib's mission was broadened from attempting to defuse the Syrian Israeli missile crisis to the resolution of the Lebanese Civil War and a stable Lebanon. At the same time, he notes that the clear purpose of the Israeli raids was the destabilisation of the government and economy of Lebanon. In this, Israel was working directly against stated U.S. policy. [44]

Why did *The New York Times* deliberately screen its readers from the knowledge that the Medreco oil refinery that Israel deliberately attacked on five occasions during the July 1981 bombardment was American owned and operated? Was *The Times* sensitive to the adverse reaction that might be aroused in its readership and advertisers to news unfavourable to Israel? Did the Jewish ownership of *The Times* and/or its support of

Zionism play a role in suppressing unfavourable coverage of Israel? While it may be impossible to resolve such questions, the episode shows the complicity of the media in support of Israel's goals and against the larger interests of U.S. policy and presumably against the interests of most Americans in a stable Lebanon and a peaceful Middle East. Significantly, a year later, as part of the fallout from the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, Secretary of State Alexander Haig was forced to resign apparently because he was seen as placing Israel's interest in fighting terror ahead of America's interest in reducing hostilities in the Middle East.

### **A Road Map to ?**

The resignation of Alexander Haig in 1982 is evidence that the Reagan Administration's irresponsibility in raising no effective objections to Israeli excesses in Lebanon had limits. The U.S. government at that time was sufficiently flexible and rational to pull back when it was necessary and was able to focus on the simple idea that a peaceful Middle East was in American interests. Today, a similar awareness is evidently lacking. The disappearance of the Soviet Union as a counterweight to U.S. interests in the Middle East has allowed the current U.S. regime a free hand to ally itself completely with the Sharon government's repressive and brutal policies.

Prime Minister Sharon has used his political skills to unite the Israeli public behind dramatic restrictions on the ability of the Palestinians to pursue civil life. Despite the current incarnation of the peace process, inaptly named the Road Map, never have the Palestinians been so threatened by Israeli policies. Through a combination of intimidation and effective use of the Israeli lobby in the U.S. and the complete subservience of Congress, Ariel Sharon, for example, has not been called to account for the March 2003 bulldozer murder of Rachel Corrie, a U.S. citizen, who was one of three international peace activists killed or seriously wounded by the Israeli army within a month's time.

Palestinians cannot get to schools, businesses, or pursue normal economic life. They must face checkpoints without end, targeted assassinations, tanks, sharpshooters, F-16s and Apache helicopters in their population centres. A security wall currently being erected in the West Bank is gobbling up thousands of acres of Palestinian olive groves, farms, factories, and is affecting hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in a hundred villages or communities located in between the wall and Israel's 1967 borders or nearby. [45]

All this while the world focuses on the Road Map which many observers view as little more than a distraction and a public relations ploy. [46]

It seems clear that the Israeli government will continue to do everything it can to prevent the replacement of Palestinian infrastructure destroyed by the IDF in the West Bank during their Spring 2002 campaign. Without reconstruction, without a viable economy, what can the future possibly hold for the Palestinians? An indication of what the Israelis have in store for the Palestinians, is the uninhibited talk of transfer even by a member of Sharon's cabinet. [47]

As Prime Minister, Sharon knows better than to espouse such views. However, in 1988, as Trade Minister and member of the inner cabinet during the first Intifada, he warned that the Palestinian uprising would lead inevitably to war with the Arab states and the necessary expulsion of the Arabs from the West Bank, Gaza and the Galilee. [48]

Many observers feared that the war on Iraq might have provided a sufficient screen for the mass expulsion of many of the more than 3.5 million Palestinians living in the Occupied Territories. But Israel was not attacked and the American advance on Baghdad was so rapid that no opportunity was provided for mass expulsions. Nevertheless, time is on the side of the Israelis and they are masters of creating and making use of opportunities. After they were forced by President Eisenhower to return the Sinai and Gaza in 1956, they waited until the political scene was primed in 1967. Once again time is on their side as the war on terror continues and U.S. policy makers continually make threats against Iran and Syria, both high on Israel's enemies list.

Prospects for peace seem slim and growing slimmer. One indicator of the difficulties that lie ahead is National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice's comment in Tel Aviv in mid-May 2003. Ms. Rice said that the security of Israel is the key to the security of the world. As one close observer of right wing influence on U.S. policy put it, this goes far beyond even the neocon claim that the security interests of the U.S. and Israel are identical. [49]

## End Notes

1. For history of Zionist conquest and occupation, see Norman Finkelstein, *Image and Reality of the Israel- Palestine Conflict*; for documentation of specific acts of Zionist terrorism, e.g., letter bombs, kidnapping, bombing cafes, theatres, markets, see Issa Nakhleh's *Encyclopaedia of the Palestine Problem*, pp. 65-23,
2. Stephen Green, *Taking Sides: America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, pp. 38-4
3. Baylis Thomas, *How Israel Was Won: A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, p. 93, note 3,
4. Green, *Taking Sides*, p. 4
5. Written by Prof. Yehuda Lapidot, on the Irgun Website: <http://www.etzel.org/english/index.html>.
6. Thus, according to Irgun accounts, when the attack took place on July 22, the Haganah had officially withdrawn its approval.
7. According to the Irgun, from the time of the first call at 12:10 pm, 22 minutes were allowed for the evacuation.
8. R. Curtiss in *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*:  
<[www.wrmea.com/backissues/031885/850318011.html](http://www.wrmea.com/backissues/031885/850318011.html)>
9. Livia Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, pp. 5-
10. Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, p. 1
11. Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, p. 1
12. Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, p. 1
13. Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, p. 2
14. Rachel Corrie in e-mail to her family, cited in Harper's *This Happens Every Day*, June 200
15. Green, *Taking Sides*, pp. 94-12
16. A dangerous liquidation, in *Yediot Achronot*, Nov. 25, 200
17. Donald Neff, *Warriors at Suez: Eisenhower takes America into the Middle East*, p. 3
18. Ehud Ya'ari, in Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, p. 6
19. Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, pp. 39-4
20. Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, p.4
21. Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, p. 4
22. D. Neff, *Warriors at Suez*, pp. 365-68 and 371-7
23. Nasser Arouri, Preface in *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, p. xiv.
24. Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, p. 2
25. Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, p. 2
26. N. Arouri, Preface in *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, pp. xiv-xv.
27. Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, p. 59, Note
28. Rosemary Sayegh, in *Too Many Enemies: The Palestinian Experience in Lebanon*, writes that 110,000 Palestinians were forced to flee northern Palestine in 1948, and the PLO was forced to relocate to Lebanon from Jordan in 1970-7
29. Noam Chomsky, *The Fateful Triangle*, 1983 edition, p. 19
30. Chomsky, *The Fateful Triangle*, p. 19
31. Oded Yinon, *A Strategy for Israel in the Nineteen Eighties*, published in Hebrew in Kivunim, Feb. 1982, by the World Zionist Organization, Jerusalem, and in English as *The Zionist Plan for the Middle East*, by the Association of Arab-American University Graduates, with Foreword by Israel Shahak. Available at:  
<[www.geocities.com/roundtable\\_texts/zionistplan.html](http://www.geocities.com/roundtable_texts/zionistplan.html)> [It seems the document is NOT Available. But see below ]
32. Shahak, Foreword in *The Zionist Plan*.
33. Stephen Sniegoski, *The War on Iraq: Conceived in Israel*, Feb. 2003, at:  
<[www.thornwalker.com/ditch/conc\\_toc.html](http://www.thornwalker.com/ditch/conc_toc.html)>.
34. For discussion of the estimates, see Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims*, p. 727, fn. 24
35. Chomsky, *The Fateful Triangle*, pp. 198, 19
36. Chomsky, *The Fateful Triangle*, p. 20
37. Stephen Green, *Living by the Sword: America and Israel in the Middle East 1968-1987*, p. 15,
38. Green, *Living by the Sword*, pp. 155, 15
39. David Shieler, *The New York Times*, April 18, 1981, quoted in Green, *Living by the Sword*, p. 15
40. Confidential State Department telegram, July 16, 1981, cited in Green, *Living by the Sword*, p. 15
41. Green, *Living by the Sword*, p. 16
42. Green, *Living by the Sword*, p. 16
43. Green, *Living by the Sword*, p. 16
44. Green, *Living by the Sword*, p. 16
45. Neve Gordon, *Can bad fences make good neighbours*, *Guardian Weekly*, May 29-June 4, 200
46. See Jeffrey Blankfort, *AIPAC Hijacks the Roadmap: How Israel's U.S. Lobby Is Stacking the Deck*, May 27, 2003 on the web:  
<<http://www.counterpunch.org/blackfort05272003.html>>.
47. Benny Elon, Israel's Tourism Minister, in *Jordan Times*, Feb. 7, 2003: We must not fear bringing up again the idea of a transfer and of open discussion of the various possibilities that it offers.
48. Quoted in Ralph Schoenman, *The Hidden History of Zionism*, p. 1
49. Stephen Sniegoski, e-mail head note to news article in *Jewish Press*: *Rice: Israel's Security Is Key to World Security*, May 18, 2003:  
<[www.jewishpress.com/news\\_article.asp?article=2380](http://www.jewishpress.com/news_article.asp?article=2380)>

*The Link*, Volume 36, Issue 3, July - August 2003.

<<http://desip.igc.org/InTheBeginning.html>>





## UNE STRATEGIE POUR ISRAEL DANS LES ANNEES 1980

Par Oded YINON

*Nous publions ici l'essentiel d'un texte paru à Jérusalem en février 1982 dans le n° 14 de la revue en hébreu Kivunim, organe de la World Zionist Organization (Organisation sioniste mondiale). Il a été traduit en anglais et publié en juin 1982 par Israël Shahak, l'infatigable défenseur israélien des droits de l'homme. Faute de place, nous n'avons pas reproduit ici les notes en bas de page.*

*Les premières pages du texte ne concernent pas directement le Moyen-Orient. L'auteur y constate que dans le monde d'aujourd'hui la morale ne joue plus guère de rôle et que ce sont les besoins matériels qui l'emportent. Il affirme aussi que l'URSS utilisera la force nucléaire pour s'imposer. Rappelons une dernière fois que ce texte a été publié au début de 1982.*

Depuis 1967, les Soviétiques ont transformé la maxime de Clausewitz en : "La guerre est la continuation de la politique par des moyens nucléaires," et ils en ont fait la devise qui guide toute leur politique. Déjà, ils sont aujourd'hui en train de réaliser leurs objectifs dans notre région et à travers le monde, et la nécessité de s'y opposer devient l'élément majeur dans notre politique de sécurité intérieure et bien entendu celui du reste du monde libre. C'est là notre défi extérieur majeur.

C'est pourquoi le monde arabo-musulman n'est pas le problème stratégique majeur que nous affronterons dans les années quatre-vingts, bien qu'il représente la principale menace contre Israël grâce à sa puissance militaire grandissante. Le monde, avec ses minorités ethniques, ses factions et crises internes, qui est étonnamment auto-destructeur, comme on peut le voir au Liban, en Iran non-arabe et maintenant aussi en Syrie, est incapable de surmonter ses problèmes fondamentaux et ne constitue pas ainsi une menace réelle à long terme pour l'Etat d'Israël, mais seulement à court terme où son pouvoir militaire immédiat a une grande importance. A long terme, ce monde sera incapable d'exister à l'intérieur de son cadre actuel dans les zones qui nous entourent sans devoir subir des transformations révolutionnaires authentiques. Le monde arabo-musulman est construit comme un château de cartes provisoire agencé par des étrangers (la France et la Grande Bretagne dans les années 1920), sans que les souhaits et les désirs des habitants aient été pris en compte. Ce monde a été divisé arbitrairement en 19 Etats, tous produits de combinaisons de minorités et de groupes ethniques hostiles les uns aux autres de sorte que chaque Etat arabe musulman subit aujourd'hui une destruction de l'intérieur et dans quelques uns d'entre eux une guerre civile fait déjà rage. La plupart des Arabes, 118 sur 170 millions, vivent en Afrique, en majorité en Egypte (45 millions). A part l'Egypte, tous les Etats du Maghreb forment un mélange d'Arabes et de Berbères non-arabes. En Algérie la guerre civile fait rage dans les montagnes de Kabylie entre les deux nations du pays. Le Maroc et l'Algérie sont en guerre au sujet du Sahara espagnol, outre les luttes internes de chacun d'entre eux. L'Islam militant met en danger l'intégrité de la Tunisie et Kaddafi foment des guerres qui sont destructrices du point de vue arabe, de la part d'un pays peu peuplé et qui ne peut pas devenir une nation puissante. C'est pour cela qu'il avait tenté dans le passé des unifications avec des Etats qui sont plus authentiques, comme l'Egypte et la Syrie. Le Soudan, l'Etat le plus écartelé dans le monde arabo-musulman d'aujourd'hui est le produit de quatre groupes hostiles les uns aux autres, une minorité arabo-musulmane sunnite qui gouverne une majorité d'Africains non-arabes, païens et chrétiens. En Egypte, il y a une majorité de musulmans sunnites faisant face à une importante minorité de chrétiens qui est dominante en Haute-Egypte (quelque 7 millions d'entre eux) de sorte que même Sadate, dans son discours du 8 Mai, exprima sa peur qu'ils ne réclament un Etat autonome, quelque chose d'identique à un «second» Liban chrétien en Egypte.

Tous les Etats arabes à l'Est d'Israël sont déchirés et infestés de conflits internes encore plus nombreux que ceux du Maghreb. La Syrie n'est pas différente fondamentalement du Liban à l'exception du régime militaire fort qui la gouverne. Mais la guerre civile réelle qui a lieu de nos jours entre la majorité sunnite et la minorité chiite alaouite régnante (pas plus de 12 % de la population) prouve la gravité du problème intérieur.

L'Irak n'est pas, encore une fois, essentiellement différent de ses voisins, bien que sa majorité soit chiite et que la minorité sunnite soit régnante. Soixante-cinq pour cent de la population n'a pas droit au chapitre en politique, où une élite de 20 % tient le pouvoir. En outre, il y a une importante minorité kurde dans le Nord, et si ce n'était la fermeté du régime, de l'armée et les revenus pétroliers, l'état futur de l'Irak ne serait pas si différent de celui du Liban dans le passé ou de la Syrie aujourd'hui. Les germes de conflit intérieur de guerre civile sont déjà visibles aujourd'hui, surtout après l'accession de Khomeiny au pouvoir en Iran, un leader que les chiites en Irak perçoivent comme leur chef naturel.

Toutes les principautés du Golfe et l'Arabie saoudite reposent sur un château de sable qui ne contient que du pétrole. Au Koweït, les Koweïtis ne représentent que le quart de la population. A Bahraïn, les chiites sont à nouveau la majorité, mais ce sont les sunnites qui sont au pouvoir. Il en est de même à Oman et au Yémen du Nord. Même au Yémen du Sud marxiste il y a une minorité chiite assez importante. En Arabie Saoudite, la moitié de la population est étrangère, égyptienne et yéménite, mais une minorité saoudienne détient le pouvoir.

La Jordanie est en réalité palestinienne, gouvernée par une minorité bédouine trans-jordanienne, mais le plus gros de l'armée et certainement l'administration sont maintenant palestiniens. En fait, Amman est aussi palestinienne que Naplouse. Tous ces pays ont des armées relativement puissantes. Mais ici aussi il y a problème. L'armée syrienne actuelle est en majeure partie sunnite avec un corps d'officiers alaouite ; l'armée irakienne est aussi chiite avec des commandants sunnites. Cela a une grande signification pour le long terme, et c'est pourquoi il ne sera pas possible de maintenir la loyauté de l'armée pour une longue durée en dehors du seul dénominateur commun : l'hostilité envers Israël, et même cela est aujourd'hui insuffisant.

Les autres Etats musulmans, face aux Arabes, aussi divisés qu'ils soient, partagent le même sort. La moitié de la population iranienne parle le persan, l'autre moitié est d'origine turque. La population turque est composée d'une majorité de musulmans sunnites (50 %), et deux importantes minorités, 12 millions d'Alaouites chiites et 6 millions de Kurdes sunnites. En Afghanistan, il y a 5 millions de chiites qui constituent le tiers de la population. Le Pakistan sunnite a quinze millions de chiites qui mettent en danger l'existence de l'Etat.

Ce tableau des minorités nationales ethniques s'étendant du Maroc à l'Inde et de la Somalie à la Turquie indique l'absence de stabilité et une dégénérescence rapide de la région entière. Quand ce tableau est ajouté au tableau économique, nous voyons comment toute la région est édifiée comme un château de cartes, incapable de résister à ses problèmes graves.

Dans ce monde géant mais éclaté il y a quelques groupes prospères et une énorme masse de pauvres. La plupart des Arabes ont un revenu annuel moyen de 300 dollars. C'est la situation en Egypte, dans les pays du Maghreb, sauf la Libye, et en Irak. Le Liban est déchiré et son économie est en train de tomber en ruines. C'est un Etat dans lequel il n'y a pas de pouvoir central, mais seulement cinq autorités souveraines *de facto* (chrétienne dans le Nord, soutenue par la Syrie et sous l'autorité du clan des Franjie, à l'Est une zone sous contrôle syrien direct, au centre une enclave chrétienne contrôlée par les Phalangistes, dans le Sud et jusqu'au Litani une région à majorité palestinienne contrôlée par l'OLP, l'Etat chrétien du Commandant Haddad et un demi million de chiites. La Syrie est dans une situation encore plus difficile et l'aide qu'elle obtiendra avec son union avec la Libye ne sera pas suffisante pour affronter les problèmes fondamentaux matériels et l'entretien d'une grande armée. L'Egypte est dans une situation encore pire : des millions de gens sont au bord de la famine, la moitié de la main d'oeuvre est sans emploi, et le logement est rare dans cette zone la plus peuplée du monde. A l'exception de l'armée, il n'y a pas un seul ministère fonctionnant efficacement et l'Etat est dans un état de banqueroute permanente et dépendant entièrement de l'assistance étrangère américaine accordée depuis la paix.

Il existe dans les Etats du Golfe, l'Arabie saoudite, la Libye et l'Egypte, la plus grande concentration d'argent et de pétrole du monde, mais ceux qui en profitent sont de petites élites qui manquent d'un large soutien de base et de confiance en soi, ce qu'aucune armée ne saurait garantir. L'Arabie saoudite avec tout son équipement ne pourrait défendre le régime des vrais dangers intérieurs et extérieurs, et ce qui s'est passé à la Mecque en 1980 en est un exemple parmi d'autres. Une situation triste et explosive entoure Israël et lui pose des défis, des problèmes, des risques mais aussi des occasions d'une portée considérable pour la première fois depuis 1967. Il y a de grandes chances que les occasions manquées à ce moment puissent se réaliser dans les années 1980 à un point et dans des dimensions que nous ne pourrions même pas imaginer aujourd'hui.

La politique de «paix» et le retour des territoires, sous la pression des Etats-Unis met en péril la réalisation des nouvelles possibilités qui s'offrent à nous. Depuis 1967, tous les gouvernements d'Israël ont lié nos buts nationaux à des besoins politiques étroits d'une part et, de l'autre, à des opinions intérieures destructives qui ont neutralisé nos capacités à l'extérieur et à l'intérieur. Le fait de n'avoir pu faire un pas en direction de la population arabe dans les nouveaux territoires, acquis au cours d'une guerre qui nous a été imposée, est l'erreur stratégique majeure commise par Israël au lendemain de la Guerre des Six Jours. Nous

nous serions épargnés depuis lors le plus amer et le plus dangereux des conflits si nous avions donné la Jordanie aux Palestiniens qui vivent en Cisjordanie. En faisant cela, nous aurions neutralisé le problème palestinien que nous affrontons maintenant, et pour lequel nous avons trouvé des solutions qui ne sont vraiment pas du tout des solutions, tel que des compromis territoriaux, ou l'autonomie, ce qui revient en réalité au même. Aujourd'hui, nous faisons face tout d'un coup à d'immenses possibilités pour changer la situation en profondeur, et cela nous le ferons dans cette décennie, autrement nous ne survivrions pas en tant qu'Etat.

Au cours des années 1980, l'Etat d'Israël devra réaliser des changements d'une portée considérable à l'intérieur, dans son régime politique et économique, parallèlement à des changements radicaux dans sa politique étrangère, afin de faire face aux défis globaux et régionaux de cette nouvelle période. La perte des champs pétrolifères du Canal de Suez, des énormes réserves de pétrole, de gaz et d'autres ressources dans la péninsule du Sinaï qui est géomorphologiquement identique aux riches pays producteurs de pétrole de la région, débouchera sur un manque d'énergie dans un proche avenir et détruira notre économie intérieure : le quart de notre PNB aussi bien que le tiers du budget sont utilisés pour l'achat de pétrole. La recherche des matières premières dans le Néguev et sur la côte ne changera pas dans un prochain avenir cet état de choses.

Récupérer la péninsule du Sinaï, avec ses ressources actuelles et potentielles, est donc une priorité politique à laquelle les accords de paix de Camp David font obstacle. La faute incombe bien sûr au gouvernement israélien actuel et aux gouvernements qui ont préparé le chemin pour le compromis territorial, depuis 1967. Les Egyptiens n'auront pas besoin de respecter les traités de paix après le retour du Sinaï, et ils feront tout ce qu'ils peuvent pour réintégrer le monde arabe et se rapprocher de l'URSS afin de se procurer de l'aide et de l'assistance militaire. L'aide américaine n'est garantie que pour une courte période du fait que les conditions de la paix et l'affaiblissement des Etats-Unis d'Amérique à l'intérieur comme à l'extérieur conduiront à une réduction de l'aide. Sans pétrole et le revenu qu'on en tire, avec les énormes dépenses actuelles, nous ne serons pas capables de franchir 1982 dans les conditions actuelles et nous devons agir afin de revenir au *statu quo* qui existait au Sinaï avant la visite de Sadate et le traité de paix fautif signé avec lui en mars 1979.

Israël a deux voies majeures à travers lesquelles il atteindra cet objectif, l'une directe et l'autre indirecte. L'option directe est la moins réaliste à cause de la nature du régime et du gouvernement en Israël aussi bien de la sagesse de Sadate qui obtint notre retrait du Sinaï, ce qui fut, au lendemain de la Guerre de 1973, sa plus importante réalisation depuis son accession au pouvoir. Israël ne rompra pas unilatéralement le traité, ni aujourd'hui ni en 1982, à moins d'être fortement contraint économiquement et politiquement et que l'Egypte fournisse à Israël l'excuse de reprendre le Sinaï pour la quatrième fois de notre courte histoire. Ce qui reste donc, c'est l'option indirecte. La situation économique en Egypte, la nature du régime et sa politique pan-arabe, amènera après avril 1982 une situation dans laquelle Israël sera forcé d'agir directement ou indirectement afin de reprendre pour longtemps le contrôle du Sinaï en tant que point stratégique économique et réserve d'énergie. L'Egypte ne représente pas un problème stratégique militaire du fait de ses problèmes internes et pourrait être ramenée à sa situation du lendemain de la Guerre de 1967 en pas plus d'une journée.

Le mythe de l'Egypte en tant que puissant leader du monde arabe fut anéanti dès 1956 et sans aucun doute il ne survécut pas en 1967, mais notre politique qui rendit le Sinaï fit du mythe un «fait». Cependant, en réalité, la puissance de l'Egypte par rapport à Israël seul et au reste du monde arabe s'est réduite de 50 % depuis 1967. L'Egypte n'est plus l'avant-garde politique dans le monde arabe et elle est économiquement au bord de la crise. Sans aide étrangère, la crise éclaterait le lendemain. A court terme, du fait du retour du Sinaï, l'Egypte gagnera plusieurs avantages à nos dépens, mais seulement à court terme jusqu'en 1982, et cela ne changera pas l'équilibre à son avantage, et amènera probablement sa chute. L'Egypte se donne déjà, dans sa politique intérieure, l'image d'un cadavre et d'autant plus si l'on tient compte de la montée du conflit entre musulmans et chrétiens. Dépecer territorialement l'Egypte en régions géographiques distinctes, c'est le dessein politique d'Israël dans les années 1980 sur son front occidental.

L'Egypte est divisée et morcelée en plusieurs îlots de pouvoir. Si l'Egypte se désintègre, des pays comme la Libye, le Soudan ou même les pays plus lointains ne continueront pas à exister dans leur forme actuelle et connaîtront à leur tour la chute et la dissolution de l'Egypte. La perspective d'un Etat chrétien copte en Haute-Egypte, parallèlement à un certain nombre d'Etats faibles avec un pouvoir très localisé, et sans un gouvernement centralisé comme de nos jours, cette perspective est la clé pour un développement historique, qui prit du retard uniquement à cause du traité de paix, mais qui semble inévitable à long terme.

Le front occidental, qui paraît en surface plus problématique, est en fait moins compliqué que le front oriental, où la plupart des événements saillants sont de fraîche date. La dissolution totale du Liban en cinq provinces doit servir de précédent pour le monde arabe dans sa totalité, y compris l'Egypte, la Syrie, l'Irak et la Péninsule arabique. La dissolution de la Syrie et plus tard de l'Irak en zones exclusivement ethniques ou religieuses comme au Liban, est l'objectif principal d'Israël pour le long terme sur son front oriental, tandis

que la dissolution du pouvoir militaire de ces Etats constitue un objectif principal dans le court terme. La Syrie se disloquera en fonction de sa structure ethnique et religieuse en plusieurs Etats comme de nos jours au Liban, de sorte qu'on aura un Etat alaouite le long de la côte, un Etat sunnite dans la région d'Alep, un autre Etat sunnite à Damas hostile à son voisin du Nord, et les Druzes qui érigeront un Etat, peut-être même sur notre Golan, et certainement dans le Hauran et dans le Nord du Jourdain. Cet état des choses sera la garantie de la paix et de la sécurité pour le long terme dans la région, et cet objectif est déjà aujourd'hui à notre portée. L'Irak, riche en pétrole d'un côté, et déchiré intérieurement de l'autre, est un candidat garanti pour les objectifs d'Israël. Sa dissolution est même encore plus importante pour nous que celle de la Syrie. L'Irak est plus fort que la Syrie. C'est la puissance irakienne qui constitue dans le court terme le plus grand danger pour Israël. Une guerre Irak-Iran déchirera l'Irak et provoquera sa chute intérieure même avant qu'il ne soit capable d'organiser une bataille sur un large front contre nous. N'importe quel conflit inter-arabe nous sera profitable dans le court terme et raccourcira la voie pour l'objectif encore plus important, celui de la dislocation de l'Irak en groupes comme en Syrie et au Liban. En Irak, une division en provinces selon des critères ethnico-religieux comme en Syrie du temps de l'Empire ottoman est possible. Ainsi, trois (ou plus) Etats existeront autour des trois importantes villes : Bassorah, Baghdad et Mossoul, et les régions chiites du Sud se sépareront des régions sunnites et kurdes au Nord. Il est possible que la confrontation irano-irakienne puisse approfondir cette polarisation.

La Péninsule arabique est une candidate toute naturelle à la dissolution du fait des pressions intérieures et extérieures, et la chose est inévitable surtout en Arabie Saoudite. Nonobstant le fait que sa puissance économique, fondée sur le pétrole, demeure intacte ou qu'elle puisse diminuer à long terme, les fissures internes et les dépressions sont un développement évident et naturel à la lumière de la structure politique présente.

La Jordanie représente un objectif stratégique immédiat dans le court terme, mais non dans le long terme, parce qu'elle ne constitue pas une menace réelle dans le long terme après sa dissolution, la fin du long règne du Roi Hussein et le transfert du pouvoir aux Palestiniens dans le court terme.

Il n'y a aucune chance pour que la Jordanie puisse continuer d'exister dans le long terme dans sa structure actuelle et la politique d'Israël, en période de guerre comme en période de paix, doit être orientée vers la liquidation de la Jordanie sous sa forme actuelle et le transfert du pouvoir à la majorité palestinienne. Changer le régime à l'Est du Jourdain amènera la fin du problème des territoires densément peuplés d'Arabes à l'Est du Jourdain. Que ce soit en période de guerre ou de paix, l'émigration à partir des territoires et leur gel démographique et économique sont les garanties pour un prochain changement sur les deux rives du Jourdain, et nous devons être plus actifs dans l'accélération de ce processus dans l'avenir le plus proche. Le projet d'autonomie doit être aussi rejeté, aussi bien que n'importe quel compromis ou division des territoires car, selon les plans de l'OLP et ceux des Arabes israéliens eux-mêmes, le plan Shefa'amr de septembre 1980, il n'est plus possible de continuer à vivre dans ce pays dans la situation actuelle sans la séparation des deux nations, les Arabes vers la Jordanie et les juifs vers les régions à l'Ouest du Jourdain. Une coexistence authentique et la paix régneront dans le pays seulement quand les Arabes auront compris que, sans un pouvoir juif s'étendant du Jourdain à la mer ils n'auront ni existence ni sécurité. Ils n'auront une nation à eux et la sécurité qu'en Jordanie.

A l'intérieur d'Israël, la distinction entre les zones de 1967 et les autres territoires, ceux de 1948, a toujours été sans signification pour les Arabes et de nos jours elle n'a plus aucune signification pour nous. Le problème doit être envisagé dans sa totalité, sans aucune division, comme celle de 67. Il doit être clair, dans n'importe quelle situation politique future ou n'importe quelle constellation militaire, que la solution du problème des Arabes indigènes viendra seulement quand ils reconnaîtront l'existence d'Israël dans des frontières sûres jusqu'à la rivière du Jourdain et au-delà, en tant que notre besoin existentiel dans cette époque difficile, l'époque du nucléaire dans laquelle nous entrerons bientôt. Il n'est plus possible de vivre avec trois-quarts de population juive sur une bande côtière dense qui est trop dangereuse à l'ère nucléaire.

La dispersion de la population est donc l'objectif stratégique intérieur du plus grand intérêt; autrement, nous cesserons d'exister à l'intérieur de n'importe quelle frontière. La Judée, la Samarie et la Galilée sont l'unique garantie de notre existence nationale et, si nous ne devenons pas la majorité dans les régions montagneuses, nous ne régnerons pas dans le pays, et nous serons comme les Croisés qui ont perdu le pays qui n'était de toute manière pas le leur, et dans lequel ils n'étaient que des étrangers pour commencer. Rééquilibrer le pays démographiquement, stratégiquement et économiquement est aujourd'hui l'objectif le plus grand et le plus central. Mettre la main sur la ligne de partage des eaux de Bersheeba jusqu'à la Haute Galilée est l'objectif national engendré par la perspective stratégique majeure qui est la colonisation de la partie la plus montagneuse du pays, aujourd'hui vide de juifs.

Réaliser nos buts sur le front oriental dépend d'abord de la réalisation de notre objectif stratégique intérieur. La transformation de la structure politique et économique, capable d'aider à la réalisation de ces

objectifs stratégiques, est la clé de l'achèvement du changement entier. Nous avons besoin de passer d'une économie centralisée dans laquelle le gouvernement a un rôle central, à un marché libre et ouvert, aussi bien que de cesser de dépendre du contribuable américain pour développer avec nos propres moyens une authentique infrastructure économique productive. Si nous ne sommes pas capables de réaliser ce changement librement et volontairement, nous y serons forcés par les développements mondiaux, surtout dans les domaines de l'économie, de l'énergie et du politique, et par notre propre isolement croissant.

D'un point de vue militaire et stratégique, l'Occident dirigé par les USA est incapable de résister à l'ensemble des pressions de l'URSS de par le monde, et Israël doit pour cela se tenir seule dans les années 80, sans aucune assistance étrangère, militaire ou économique, et ceci est aujourd'hui dans nos possibilités, sans compromis. Des changements rapides dans le monde vont produire un changement dans la condition des juifs dans le monde, pour lesquels Israël deviendra non seulement un dernier recours mais aussi la seule alternative existentielle. Nous ne pouvons pas assurer que les juifs américains et les communautés d'Europe et d'Amérique latine continueront d'exister dans l'avenir dans la forme actuelle.

Notre existence dans ce pays même est sûre et il n'y a aucune force qui pourrait nous en déloger ni par la violence ni par la ruse (méthode de Sadate). Malgré les difficultés de la politique erronée de «paix» et le problème des Arabes israéliens et celui des territoires, nous pouvons traiter efficacement ces problèmes dans un avenir prévisible.

### Le commentaire d'Israël Shahak

Il faut clarifier trois éléments importants pour pouvoir comprendre les possibilités les plus significatives pour la réalisation de ce plan sioniste pour le Moyen-Orient, et aussi pourquoi il doit être publié.

#### Les conditions militaires de ce plan.

Nous n'avons pas mentionné jusqu'ici les conditions militaires de ce plan, mais lors des multiples occasions où l'on vient à «expliquer» dans des réunions privées un plan de ce genre à des membres de l'establishment israélien, cet aspect militaire est alors clarifié. Il est supposé que les forces militaires israéliennes, dans toutes ses branches, sont insuffisantes pour assumer l'occupation d'aussi vastes territoires que ceux qui ont été mentionnés plus haut. En réalité, même en temps de «troubles» palestiniens intenses, les forces de l'armée israélienne sont trop dispersées. La parade est la méthode de gouverner au moyen des «forces de Haddad» ou des «Associations de villages» : des forces locales soumises à des «chefs» complètement dissociés de la population, n'ayant même pas derrière eux de structure féodale ou de parti (comme en ont les Phalangistes, par exemple). Les «Etats» proposés par Yinon sont des «Territoires de Haddad» ou des «Associations de villages», et leurs forces armées en seraient à n'en pas douter similaires. En plus, la supériorité militaire israélienne serait dans de telles conditions beaucoup plus grande qu'elle ne l'est même maintenant, de sorte que tout mouvement de révolte serait «puni» soit par une humiliation massive comme en Cisjordanie et dans la Bande de Gaza, ou par bombardement et effacement de villes, comme aujourd'hui (Juin 1982) au Liban, ou par les deux. Afin d'y parvenir, *le plan*, comme il est expliqué oralement, appelle à l'établissement de garnisons à des endroits stratégiques entre les mini-Etats, pourvues de forces destructives mobiles. En fait, nous avons vu quelque chose de similaire dans le territoire de Haddad et nous verrons certainement le premier exemple de ce système fonctionner soit dans le Sud du Liban ou dans tout le Liban.

Il est évident que les suppositions militaires énoncées plus haut, et aussi le plan dans sa totalité, dépendent aussi du fait de savoir si les Arabes vont continuer d'être plus divisés que maintenant, et de l'absence en leur sein de tout mouvement progressiste de masse. Il se peut que ces deux conditions soient écartées dès que le plan sera bien avancé, avec des conséquences qui sont imprévisibles.

#### Pourquoi est-il nécessaire de publier ce plan en Israël.

La raison de la publication est la nature double de la société israélo-judaïque : une grande étendue de liberté et de démocratie, surtout pour les juifs, combinée à l'expansionnisme et la discrimination raciale. Dans une telle situation, l'élite judéo-israélienne (du fait que les masses suivent la télé et les discours de Begin) a besoin d'être persuadée. Les premiers pas dans ce processus de persuasion sont d'ordre oral, comme on l'a indiqué plus haut, mais il vient le temps où cela devient insuffisant. Le matériel écrit doit être produit au bénéfice de «persuadeurs» et «explicateurs» plus stupides (par exemple les officiers de rang moyen qui sont,



La version anglaise de notre ami Israël Shahak, qui a traduit de l'hébreu:

# The Zionist Plan for the Middle East

Translated and edited by **Israel Shahak**

## Publisher's Note

The Association of Arab-American University Graduates finds it compelling to inaugurate its new publication series, Special Documents, with Oded Yinon's article which appeared in *Kivunim* (Directions), the journal of the Department of Information of the World Zionist Organization. Oded Yinon is an Israeli journalist and was formerly attached to the Foreign Ministry of Israel. To our knowledge, this document is the most explicit, detailed and unambiguous statement to date of the Zionist strategy in the Middle East. Furthermore, it stands as an accurate representation of the "vision" for the entire Middle East of the presently ruling Zionist regime of Begin, Sharon and Eitan. Its importance, hence, lies not in its historical value but in the nightmare which it presents.

The plan operates on two essential premises. To survive, Israel must 1) become an imperial regional power, and 2) must effect the division of the whole area into small states by the dissolution of all existing Arab states. Small here will depend on the ethnic or sectarian composition of each state. Consequently, the Zionist hope is that sectarian-based states become Israel's satellites and, ironically, its source of moral legitimation.

This is not a new idea, nor does it surface for the first time in Zionist strategic thinking. Indeed, fragmenting all Arab states into smaller units has been a recurrent theme. This theme has been documented on a very modest scale in the AAUG publication, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism* (1980), by Livia Rokach. [See below ] Based on the memoirs of Moshe Sharett, former Prime Minister of Israel, Rokach's study documents, in convincing detail, the Zionist plan as it applies to Lebanon and as it was prepared in the mid-fifties.

The first massive Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1978 bore this plan out to the minutest detail. The second and more barbaric and encompassing Israeli invasion of Lebanon on June 6, 1982, aims to effect certain parts of this plan which hopes to see not only Lebanon, but Syria and Jordan as well, in fragments. This ought to make mockery of Israeli public claims regarding their desire for a strong and independent Lebanese central government. More accurately, they want a Lebanese central government that sanctions their regional imperialist designs by signing a peace treaty with them. They also seek acquiescence in their designs by the Syrian, Iraqi, Jordanian and other Arab governments as well as by the Palestinian people. What they want and what they are planning for is not an Arab world, but a world of Arab fragments that is ready to succumb to Israeli hegemony. Hence, Oded Yinon in his essay, "A Strategy for Israel in the 1980's," talks about "far-reaching

opportunities for the first time since 1967" that are created by the "very stormy situation [that] surrounds Israel."

The Zionist policy of displacing the Palestinians from Palestine is very much an active policy, but is pursued more forcefully in times of conflict, such as in the 1947-1948 war and in the 1967 war. An appendix entitled "Israel Talks of a New Exodus" is included in this publication to demonstrate past Zionist dispersals of Palestinians from their homeland and to show, besides the main Zionist document we present, other Zionist planning for the de-Palestinization of Palestine.

It is clear from the *Kivunim* document, published in February, 1982, that the "far-reaching opportunities" of which Zionist strategists have been thinking are the same "opportunities" of which they are trying to convince the world and which they claim were generated by their June, 1982 invasion. It is also clear that the Palestinians were never the sole target of Zionist plans, but the priority target since their viable and independent presence as a people negates the essence of the Zionist state. Every Arab state, however, especially those with cohesive and clear nationalist directions, is a real target sooner or later.

Contrasted with the detailed and unambiguous Zionist strategy elucidated in this document, Arab and Palestinian strategy, unfortunately, suffers from ambiguity and incoherence. There is no indication that Arab strategists have internalized the Zionist plan in its full ramifications. Instead, they react with incredulity and shock whenever a new stage of it unfolds. This is apparent in Arab reaction, albeit muted, to the Israeli siege of Beirut. The sad fact is that as long as the Zionist strategy for the Middle East is not taken seriously Arab reaction to any future siege of other Arab capitals will be the same.

Khalil Nakhleh  
July 23, 1982

## Foreword by Israel Shahak

The following essay represents, in my opinion, the accurate and detailed plan of the present Zionist regime (of Sharon and Eitan) for the Middle East which is based on the division of the whole area into small states, and the dissolution of all the existing Arab states. I will comment on the military aspect of this plan in a concluding note. Here I want to draw the attention of the readers to several important points:

1. The idea that all the Arab states should be broken down, by Israel, into small units, occurs again and again in Israeli strategic thinking. For example, Ze'ev Schiff, the military correspondent of *Ha'aretz* (and probably the most knowledgeable in Israel, on this topic) writes about the "best" that can happen for Israeli interests in Iraq: "The dissolution of Iraq into a Shi'ite state, a Sunni state and the separation of the Kurdish part" (*Ha'aretz* 6/2/1982). Actually, this aspect of the plan is very old.

2. **The strong connection with Neo-Conservative thought in the USA is very prominent**, especially in the author's notes. But, while lip service is paid to the idea of the "defense of the West" from Soviet power, the real aim of the author, and of the present Israeli establishment is clear: To make an Imperial Israel into a world power. In other words, the aim of Sharon is to deceive the Americans after he has deceived all the rest. [**Remember these prophetic lines have been written 20 years ago! ggb** ]



3. It is obvious that much of the relevant data, both in the notes and in the text, is garbled or omitted, such as the financial help of the U.S. to Israel. Much of it is pure fantasy. But, the plan is not to be regarded as not influential, or as not capable of realization for a short time. The plan follows faithfully the geopolitical ideas current in Germany of 1890-1933, which were swallowed whole by Hitler and the Nazi movement, and determined their aims for East Europe. Those aims, especially the division of the existing states, were carried out in 1939-1941, and only an alliance on the global scale prevented their consolidation for a period of time.

The notes by the author follow the text. To avoid confusion, I did not add any notes of my own, but have put the substance of them into this foreward and the conclusion at the end. I have, however, emphasized some portions of the text.

Israel Shahak  
June 13, 1982

## A Strategy for Israel in the Nineteen Eighties

by **Oded Yinon**

This essay originally appeared in Hebrew in *Kivunim* (Directions), *A Journal for Judaism and Zionism*; Issue No. 14, Winter, 5742, February 1982, Editor: Yoram Beck. Editorial Committee: Eli Eyal, Yoram Beck, Amnon Hadari, Yohanan Manor, Elieser Schweid. Published by the Department of Publicity/The World Zionist Organization, Jerusalem.

At the outset of the nineteen eighties the State of Israel is in need of a new perspective as to its place, its aims and national targets, at home and abroad. This need has become even more vital due to a number of central processes which the country, the region and the world are undergoing. We are living today in the early stages of a new epoch in human history which is not at all similar to its predecessor, and its characteristics are totally different from what we have hitherto known. That is why we need an understanding of the central processes which typify this historical epoch on the one hand, and on the other hand we need a world outlook and an operational strategy in accordance with the new conditions. The existence, prosperity and steadfastness of the Jewish state will depend upon its ability to adopt a new framework for its domestic and foreign affairs.

This epoch is characterized by several traits which we can already diagnose, and which symbolize a genuine revolution in our present lifestyle. The dominant process is the breakdown of the rationalist, humanist outlook as the major cornerstone supporting the life and achievements of Western civilization since the Renaissance. The political, social and economic views which have emanated from this foundation have been based on several "truths" which are presently disappearing -- for example, the view that man as an individual is the center of the universe and everything exists in order to fulfill his basic material needs. This position is being invalidated in the present when it has become clear that the amount of resources in the cosmos does not meet Man's requirements, his economic needs or his demographic constraints. In a world in which there are four billion human beings and economic and energy resources which do not grow proportionally to meet the needs of mankind, it is unrealistic to expect to fulfill the main requirement of

Western Society, [1] i.e., the wish and aspiration for boundless consumption. The view that ethics plays no part in determining the direction Man takes, but rather his material needs do -- that view is becoming prevalent today as we see a world in which nearly all values are disappearing. We are losing the ability to assess the simplest things, especially when they concern the simple question of what is Good and what is Evil.

The vision of man's limitless aspirations and abilities shrinks in the face of the sad facts of life, when we witness the break-up of world order around us. The view which promises liberty and freedom to mankind seems absurd in light of the sad fact that three fourths of the human race lives under totalitarian regimes. The views concerning equality and social justice have been transformed by socialism and especially by Communism into a laughing stock. There is no argument as to the truth of these two ideas, but it is clear that they have not been put into practice properly and the majority of mankind has lost the liberty, the freedom and the opportunity for equality and justice. In this nuclear world in which we are (still) living in relative peace for thirty years, the concept of peace and coexistence among nations has no meaning when a superpower like the USSR holds a military and political doctrine of the sort it has: that not only is a nuclear war possible and necessary in order to achieve the ends of Marxism, but that it is possible to survive after it, not to speak of the fact that one can be victorious in it. [2]

The essential concepts of human society, especially those of the West, are undergoing a change due to political, military and economic transformations. Thus, the nuclear and conventional might of the USSR has transformed the epoch that has just ended into the last respite before the great saga that will demolish a large part of our world in a multi-dimensional global war, in comparison with which the past world wars will have been mere child's play. The power of nuclear as well as of conventional weapons, their quantity, their precision and quality will turn most of our world upside down within a few years, and we must align ourselves so as to face that in Israel. That is, then, the main threat to our existence and that of the Western world. [3] The war over resources in the world, the Arab monopoly on oil, and the need of the West to import most of its raw materials from the Third World, are transforming the world we know, given that one of the major aims of the USSR is to defeat the West by gaining control over the gigantic resources in the Persian Gulf and in the southern part of Africa, in which the majority of world minerals are located. We can imagine the dimensions of the global confrontation which will face us in the future.

The Gorshkov doctrine calls for Soviet control of the oceans and mineral rich areas of the Third World. That together with the present Soviet nuclear doctrine which holds that it is possible to manage, win and survive a nuclear war, in the course of which the West's military might will be destroyed and its inhabitants made slaves in the service of Marxism-Leninism, is the main danger to world peace and to our own existence. Since 1967, the Soviets have transformed Clausewitz' dictum into "War is the continuation of policy in nuclear means," and made it the motto which guides all their policies. Already today they are busy carrying out their aims in our region and throughout the world, and the need to face them becomes the major element in our country's security policy and of course that of the rest of the Free World. That is our major foreign challenge. [4]

The Arab Moslem world, therefore, is not the major strategic problem which we shall face in the Eighties, despite the fact that it carries the main threat against Israel, due to its growing military might. This world, with its ethnic minorities, its factions and internal crises, which is astonishingly self-destructive, as we can see in Lebanon, in non-Arab Iran and now also in Syria, is unable to deal successfully with its fundamental problems and does not therefore constitute a real threat against the State of Israel in the long run, but only in the short run where its immediate military power has great import.

In the long run, this world will be unable to exist within its present framework in the areas around us without having to go through genuine revolutionary changes. The Moslem Arab World is built like a temporary house of cards put together by foreigners (France and Britain in the Nineteen Twenties), without the wishes and desires of the inhabitants having been taken into account. It was arbitrarily divided into 19 states, all made of combinations of minorities and ethnic groups which are hostile to one another, so that every Arab Moslem state nowadays faces ethnic social destruction from within, and in some a civil war is already raging. [5] Most of the Arabs, 118 million out of 170 million, live in Africa, mostly in Egypt (45 million today).

Apart from Egypt, all the Maghreb states are made up of a mixture of Arabs and non-Arab Berbers. In Algeria there is already a civil war raging in the Kabile mountains between the two nations in the country. Morocco and Algeria are at war with each other over Spanish Sahara, in addition to the internal struggle in each of them. Militant Islam endangers the integrity of Tunisia and Qaddafi organizes wars which are destructive from the Arab point of view, from a country which is sparsely populated and which cannot become a powerful nation. That is why he has been attempting unifications in the past with states that are more genuine, like Egypt and Syria. Sudan, the most torn apart state in the Arab Moslem world today is built upon four groups hostile to each other, an Arab Moslem Sunni minority which rules over a majority of non-Arab Africans, Pagans, and Christians. In Egypt there is a Sunni Moslem majority facing a large minority of Christians which is dominant in upper Egypt: some 7 million of them, so that even Sadat, in his speech on May 8, expressed the fear that they will want a state of their own, something like a "second" Christian Lebanon in Egypt.

All the Arab States east of Israel are torn apart, broken up and riddled with inner conflict even more than those of the Maghreb. Syria is fundamentally no different from Lebanon except in the strong military regime which rules it. But the real civil war taking place nowadays between the Sunni majority and the Shi'ite Alawi ruling minority (a mere 12% of the population) testifies to the severity of the domestic trouble.

Iraq is, once again, no different in essence from its neighbors, although its majority is Shi'ite and the ruling minority Sunni. Sixty-five percent of the population has no say in politics, in which an elite of 20 percent holds the power. In addition there is a large Kurdish minority in the north, and if it weren't for the strength of the ruling regime, the army and the oil revenues, Iraq's future state would be no different than that of Lebanon in the past or of Syria today. The seeds of inner conflict and civil war are apparent today already, especially after the rise of Khomeini to power in Iran, a leader whom the Shi'ites in Iraq view as their natural leader.

All the Gulf principalities and Saudi Arabia are built upon a delicate house of sand in which there is only oil. In Kuwait, the Kuwaitis constitute only a quarter of the population. In Bahrain, the Shi'ites are the majority but are deprived of power. In the UAE, Shi'ites are once again the majority but the Sunnis are in power. The same is true of Oman and North Yemen. Even in the Marxist South Yemen there is a sizable Shi'ite minority. In Saudi Arabia half the population is foreign, Egyptian and Yemenite, but a Saudi minority holds power.

Jordan is in reality Palestinian, ruled by a Trans-Jordanian Bedouin minority, but most of the army and certainly the bureaucracy is now Palestinian. As a matter of fact Amman is as Palestinian as Nablus. All of these countries have powerful armies, relatively speaking. But there is a problem there too. The Syrian army today is mostly Sunni with an Alawi officer corps, the Iraqi army Shi'ite with Sunni commanders. This has great significance in the long run, and that is why it will not be possible to retain the loyalty of the army for a long time except where it comes to the only common denominator: The hostility towards Israel, and today even that is insufficient.

Alongside the Arabs, split as they are, the other Moslem states share a similar predicament. Half of Iran's population is comprised of a Persian speaking group and the other half of an ethnically Turkish group. Turkey's population comprises a Turkish Sunni Moslem majority, some 50%, and two large minorities, 12 million Shi'ite Alawis and 6 million Sunni Kurds. In Afghanistan there are 5 million Shi'ites who constitute one third of the population. In Sunni Pakistan there are 15 million Shi'ites who endanger the existence of that state.

This national ethnic minority picture extending from Morocco to India and from Somalia to Turkey points to the absence of stability and a rapid degeneration in the entire region. When this picture is added to the economic one, we see how the entire region is built like a house of cards, unable to withstand its severe problems.

In this giant and fractured world there are a few wealthy groups and a huge mass of poor people. Most of the Arabs have an average yearly income of 300 dollars. That is the situation in Egypt, in most of the Maghreb countries except for Libya, and in Iraq. Lebanon is torn apart and its economy is falling to pieces. It is a state in which there is no centralized power, but only 5 de facto sovereign authorities (Christian in the north, supported by the Syrians and under the rule of the Franjeh clan, in the East an area of direct Syrian conquest, in the center a Phalangist controlled Christian enclave, in the south and up to the Litani river a mostly Palestinian region controlled by the PLO and Major Haddad's state of Christians and half a million Shi'ites). Syria is in an even graver situation and even the assistance she will obtain in the future after the unification with Libya will not be sufficient for dealing with the basic problems of existence and the maintenance of a large army. Egypt is in the worst situation: Millions are on the verge of hunger, half the labor force is unemployed, and housing is scarce in this most densely populated area of the world. Except for the army, there is not a single department operating efficiently and the state is in a permanent state of bankruptcy and depends entirely on American foreign assistance granted since the peace. [6]

In the Gulf states, Saudi Arabia, Libya and Egypt there is the largest accumulation of money and oil in the world, but those enjoying it are tiny elites who lack a wide base of support and self-confidence, something that no army can guarantee. [7] The Saudi army with all its equipment cannot defend the regime from real dangers at home or abroad, and what took place in Mecca in 1980 is only an example. A sad and very stormy situation surrounds Israel and creates challenges for it, problems, risks but also far-reaching opportunities for the first time since 1967. Chances are that opportunities missed at that time will become achievable in the Eighties to an extent and along dimensions which we cannot even imagine today.

The "peace" policy and the return of territories, through a dependence upon the US, precludes the realization of the new option created for us. Since 1967, all the governments of Israel have tied our national aims down to narrow political needs, on the one hand, and on the other to destructive opinions at home which neutralized our capacities both at home and abroad. Failing to take steps towards the Arab population in the new territories, acquired in the course of a war forced upon us, is the major strategic error committed by Israel on the morning after the Six Day War. We could have saved ourselves all the bitter and dangerous conflict since then if we had given Jordan to the Palestinians who live west of the Jordan river. By doing that we would have neutralized the Palestinian problem which we nowadays face, and to which we have found solutions that are really no solutions at all, such as territorial compromise or autonomy which amount, in fact, to the same thing. [8] Today, we suddenly face immense opportunities for transforming the situation thoroughly and this we must do in the coming decade, otherwise we shall not survive as a state.

In the course of the Nineteen Eighties, the State of Israel will have to go through far-reaching changes in its political and economic regime domestically, along with radical changes in its foreign policy, in order to stand up to the global and regional challenges of this new epoch. The loss of the Suez Canal oil fields, of the immense potential of the oil, gas and other natural resources in the Sinai peninsula which is geomorphologically identical to the rich oil-producing countries in the region, will result in an energy drain in the near future and will destroy our domestic economy: one quarter of our present GNP as well as one third of the budget is used for the purchase of oil. [9] The search for raw materials in the Negev and on the coast will not, in the near future, serve to alter that state of affairs.

(Regaining) the Sinai peninsula with its present and potential resources is therefore a political priority which is obstructed by the Camp David and the peace agreements. The fault for that lies of course with the present Israeli government and the governments which paved the road to the policy of territorial compromise, the Alignment governments since 1967. The Egyptians will not need to keep the peace treaty after the return of the Sinai, and they will do all they can to return to the fold of the Arab world and to the USSR in order to gain support and military assistance. American aid is guaranteed only for a short while, for the terms of the peace and the weakening of the U.S. both at home and abroad will bring about a reduction in aid. Without oil and the income from it, with the present enormous expenditure, we will not be able to get through 1982 under the present conditions and we will have to act in order to return the situation to the status quo which existed in Sinai prior to Sadat's visit and the mistaken peace agreement signed with him in March 1979. [10]

Israel has two major routes through which to realize this purpose, one direct and the other indirect. The direct option is the less realistic one because of the nature of the regime and government in Israel as well as the wisdom of Sadat who obtained our withdrawal from Sinai, which was, next to the war of 1973, his major achievement since he took power. Israel will not unilaterally break the treaty, neither today, nor in 1982, unless it is very hard pressed economically and politically and Egypt provides Israel with the excuse to take the Sinai back into our hands for the fourth time in our short history. What is left therefore, is the indirect option. The economic situation in Egypt, the nature of the regime and its pan-Arab policy, will bring about a situation after April 1982 in which Israel will be forced to act directly or indirectly in order to regain control over Sinai as a strategic, economic and energy reserve for the long run. Egypt does not constitute a military strategic problem due to its internal conflicts and it could be driven back to the post 1967 war situation in no more than one day. [11]

The myth of Egypt as the strong leader of the Arab World was demolished back in 1956 and definitely did not survive 1967, but our policy, as in the return of the Sinai, served to turn the myth into "fact." In reality, however, Egypt's power in proportion both to Israel alone and to the rest of the Arab World has gone down about 50 percent since 1967. Egypt is no longer the leading political power in the Arab World and is economically on the verge of a crisis. Without foreign assistance the crisis will come tomorrow. [12] In the short run, due to the return of the Sinai, Egypt will gain several advantages at our expense, but only in the short run until 1982, and that will not change the balance of power to its benefit, and will possibly bring about its downfall. Egypt, in its present domestic political picture, is already a corpse, all the more so if we take into account the growing Moslem-Christian rift. Breaking Egypt down territorially into distinct geographical regions is the political aim of Israel in the Nineteen Eighties on its Western front.

Egypt is divided and torn apart into many foci of authority. If Egypt falls apart, countries like Libya, Sudan or even the more distant states will not continue to exist in their present form and will join the downfall and

dissolution of Egypt. The vision of a Christian Coptic State in Upper Egypt alongside a number of weak states with very localized power and without a centralized government as to date, is the key to a historical development which was only set back by the peace agreement but which seems inevitable in the long run. [13]

The Western front, which on the surface appears more problematic, is in fact less complicated than the Eastern front, in which most of the events that make the headlines have been taking place recently. Lebanon's total dissolution into five provinces serves as a precedent for the entire Arab world including Egypt, Syria, Iraq and the Arabian peninsula and is already following that track. The dissolution of Syria and Iraq later on into ethnically or religiously unique areas such as in Lebanon, is Israel's primary target on the Eastern front in the long run, while the dissolution of the military power of those states serves as the primary short term target. Syria will fall apart, in accordance with its ethnic and religious structure, into several states such as in present day Lebanon, so that there will be a Shi'ite Alawi state along its coast, a Sunni state in the Aleppo area, another Sunni state in Damascus hostile to its northern neighbor, and the Druzes who will set up a state, maybe even in our Golan, and certainly in the Hauran and in northern Jordan. This state of affairs will be the guarantee for peace and security in the area in the long run, and that aim is already within our reach today. [14]

Iraq, rich in oil on the one hand and internally torn on the other, is guaranteed as a candidate for Israel's targets. Its dissolution is even more important for us than that of Syria. Iraq is stronger than Syria. In the short run it is Iraqi power which constitutes the greatest threat to Israel. An Iraqi-Iranian war will tear Iraq apart and cause its downfall at home even before it is able to organize a struggle on a wide front against us. Every kind of inter-Arab confrontation will assist us in the short run and will shorten the way to the more important aim of breaking up Iraq into denominations as in Syria and in Lebanon. In Iraq, a division into provinces along ethnic/religious lines as in Syria during Ottoman times is possible. So, three (or more) states will exist around the three major cities: Basra, Baghdad and Mosul, and Shi'ite areas in the south will separate from the Sunni and Kurdish north. It is possible that the present Iranian-Iraqi confrontation will deepen this polarization. [15]

The entire Arabian peninsula is a natural candidate for dissolution due to internal and external pressures, and the matter is inevitable especially in Saudi Arabia. Regardless of whether its economic might based on oil remains intact or whether it is diminished in the long run, the internal rifts and breakdowns are a clear and natural development in light of the present political structure. [16]

Jordan constitutes an immediate strategic target in the short run but not in the long run, for it does not constitute a real threat in the long run after its dissolution, the termination of the lengthy rule of King Hussein and the transfer of power to the Palestinians in the short run.

There is no chance that Jordan will continue to exist in its present structure for a long time, and Israel's policy, both in war and in peace, ought to be directed at the liquidation of Jordan under the present regime and the transfer of power to the Palestinian majority. Changing the regime east of the river will also cause the termination of the problem of the territories densely populated with Arabs west of the Jordan. Whether in war or under conditions of peace, emigration from the territories and economic demographic freeze in them, are the guarantees for the coming change on both banks of the river, and we ought to be active in order to accelerate this process in the nearest future. The autonomy plan ought also to be rejected, as well as any compromise or division of the territories for, given the plans of the PLO and those of the Israeli Arabs themselves, the Shefa'amr plan of September 1980, it is not possible to go on living in this country in the present situation without separating the two nations, the Arabs to Jordan and the Jews to the

areas west of the river. Genuine coexistence and peace will reign over the land only when the Arabs understand that without Jewish rule between the Jordan and the sea they will have neither existence nor security. A nation of their own and security will be theirs only in Jordan. [17]

Within Israel the distinction between the areas of '67 and the territories beyond them, those of '48, has always been meaningless for Arabs and nowadays no longer has any significance for us. The problem should be seen in its entirety without any divisions as of '67. It should be clear, under any future political situation or military constellation, that the solution of the problem of the indigenous Arabs will come only when they recognize the existence of Israel in secure borders up to the Jordan river and beyond it, as our existential need in this difficult epoch, the nuclear epoch which we shall soon enter. It is no longer possible to live with three fourths of the Jewish population on the dense shoreline which is so dangerous in a nuclear epoch.

Dispersal of the population is therefore a domestic strategic aim of the highest order; otherwise, we shall cease to exist within any borders. Judea, Samaria and the Galilee are our sole guarantee for national existence, and if we do not become the majority in the mountain areas, we shall not rule in the country and we shall be like the Crusaders, who lost this country which was not theirs anyhow, and in which they were foreigners to begin with. Rebalancing the country demographically, strategically and economically is the highest and most central aim today. Taking hold of the mountain watershed from Beersheba to the Upper Galilee is the national aim generated by the major strategic consideration which is settling the mountainous part of the country that is empty of Jews today. [18]

Realizing our aims on the Eastern front depends first on the realization of this internal strategic objective. The transformation of the political and economic structure, so as to enable the realization of these strategic aims, is the key to achieving the entire change. We need to change from a centralized economy in which the government is extensively involved, to an open and free market as well as to switch from depending upon the U.S. taxpayer to developing, with our own hands, of a genuine productive economic infrastructure. If we are not able to make this change freely and voluntarily, we shall be forced into it by world developments, especially in the areas of economics, energy, and politics, and by our own growing isolation. [19]

From a military and strategic point of view, the West led by the U.S. is unable to withstand the global pressures of the USSR throughout the world, and Israel must therefore stand alone in the Eighties, without any foreign assistance, military or economic, and this is within our capacities today, with no compromises. [20] Rapid changes in the world will also bring about a change in the condition of world Jewry to which Israel will become not only a last resort but the only existential option. We cannot assume that U.S. Jews, and the communities of Europe and Latin America will continue to exist in the present form in the future. [21]

Our existence in this country itself is certain, and there is no force that could remove us from here either forcefully or by treachery (Sadat's method). Despite the difficulties of the mistaken "peace" policy and the problem of the Israeli Arabs and those of the territories, we can effectively deal with these problems in the foreseeable future.

## Conclusions - by Israel Shahak

Three important points have to be clarified in order to be able to understand the significant possibilities of realization of this Zionist plan for the Middle East, and also why it had to be published.

### **The Military Background of The Plan**

The military conditions of this plan have not been mentioned above, but on the many occasions where something very like it is being "explained" in closed meetings to members of the Israeli Establishment, this point is clarified. It is assumed that the Israeli military forces, in all their branches, are insufficient for the actual work of occupation of such wide territories as discussed above. In fact, even in times of intense Palestinian "unrest" on the West Bank, the forces of the Israeli Army are stretched out too much. The answer to that is the method of ruling by means of "Haddad forces" or of "Village Associations" (also known as "Village Leagues"): local forces under "leaders" completely dissociated from the population, not having even any feudal or party structure (such as the Phalangists have, for example). The "states" proposed by Yinon are "Haddadland" and "Village Associations," and their armed forces will be, no doubt, quite similar. In addition, Israeli military superiority in such a situation will be much greater than it is even now, so that any movement of revolt will be "punished" either by mass humiliation as in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, or by bombardment and obliteration of cities, as in Lebanon now (June 1982), or by both. In order to ensure this, the plan, as explained orally, calls for the establishment of Israeli garrisons in focal places between the mini states, equipped with the necessary mobile destructive forces. In fact, we have seen something like this in Haddadland and we will almost certainly soon see the first example of this system functioning either in South Lebanon or in all Lebanon.

It is obvious that the above military assumptions, and the whole plan too, depend also on the Arabs continuing to be even more divided than they are now, and on the lack of any truly progressive mass movement among them. It may be that those two conditions will be removed only when the plan will be well advanced, with consequences which can not be foreseen.

### **Why it is necessary to publish this in Israel?**

The reason for publication is the dual nature of the Israeli-Jewish society: A very great measure of freedom and democracy, specially for Jews, combined with expansionism and racist discrimination. In such a situation the Israeli-Jewish elite (for the masses follow the TV and Begin's speeches) has to be persuaded. The first steps in the process of persuasion are oral, as indicated above, but a time comes in which it becomes inconvenient. Written material must be produced for the benefit of the more stupid "persuaders" and "explainers" (for example medium-rank officers, who are, usually, remarkably stupid). They then "learn it," more or less, and preach to others. It should be remarked that Israel, and even the Yishuv from the Twenties, has always functioned in this way. I myself well remember how (before I was "in opposition") the necessity of war with was explained to me and others a year before the 1956 war, and the necessity of conquering "the rest of Western Palestine when we will have the opportunity" was explained in the years 1965-67.

### **Why is it assumed that there is no special risk from the outside in the publication of such plans?**

Such risks can come from two sources, so long as the principled opposition inside Israel is very weak (a situation which may change as a



consequence of the war on Lebanon) : The Arab World, including the Palestinians, and the United States. The Arab World has shown itself so far quite incapable of a detailed and rational analysis of Israeli-Jewish society, and the Palestinians have been, on the average, no better than the rest. In such a situation, even those who are shouting about the dangers of Israeli expansionism (which are real enough) are doing this not because of factual and detailed knowledge, but because of belief in myth. A good example is the very persistent belief in the non-existent writing on the wall of the Knesset of the Biblical verse about the Nile and the Euphrates. Another example is the persistent, and completely false declarations, which were made by some of the most important Arab leaders, that the two blue stripes of the Israeli flag symbolize the Nile and the Euphrates, while in fact they are taken from the stripes of the Jewish praying shawl (Talit). The Israeli specialists assume that, on the whole, the Arabs will pay no attention to their serious discussions of the future, and the Lebanon war has proved them right. So why should they not continue with their old methods of persuading other Israelis?

In the United States a very similar situation exists, at least until now. The more or less serious commentators take their information about Israel, and much of their opinions about it, from two sources. The first is from articles in the "liberal" American press, written almost totally by Jewish admirers of Israel who, even if they are critical of some aspects of the Israeli state, practice loyally what Stalin used to call "the constructive criticism." (In fact those among them who claim also to be "Anti-Stalinist" are in reality more Stalinist than Stalin, with Israel being their god which has not yet failed). In the framework of such critical worship it must be assumed that Israel has always "good intentions" and only "makes mistakes," and therefore such a plan would not be a matter for discussion--exactly as the Biblical genocides committed by Jews are not mentioned. The other source of information, The Jerusalem Post, has similar policies. So long, therefore, as the situation exists in which Israel is really a "closed society" to the rest of the world, because the world wants to close its eyes, the publication and even the beginning of the realization of such a plan is realistic and feasible.

Israel Shahak  
June 17, 1982  
Jerusalem

### About the Translator

Israel Shahak (1933-2001) was a professor of organic chemistry at Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the chairman of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights. He published The Shahak Papers, collections of key articles from the Hebrew press, and was the author of numerous articles and books, among them *Non-Jew in the Jewish State, Israel's Global Role: Weapons for Repression*, published by the AAUG in 1982.

### Notes (Yinon article)

1. American Universities Field Staff. Report No. 33, 1979. According to this research, the population of the world will be 6 billion in the year 2000. Today's world population can be broken down as follows: China, 958 million; India, 635 million; USSR, 261 million; U.S., 218 million Indonesia, 140 million; Brazil and Japan, 110 million each. According to the figures of the U.N. Population Fund for 1980, there will be, in 2000, 50 cities with a population of over 5 million each. The population of the Third World will then be 80% of the world population. According to Justin Blackwelder, U.S. Census Office chief, the world population will not reach 6 billion because of hunger.

2. Soviet nuclear policy has been well summarized by two American Sovietologists: Joseph D. Douglas and Amoretta M. Hoeber, *Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War*, (Stanford, Ca., Hoover Inst. Press, 1979). In the Soviet Union tens and hundreds of articles and books are published each year which detail the Soviet doctrine for nuclear war and there is a great deal of documentation translated into English and published by the U.S. Air Force, including USAF: *Marxism-Leninism on War and the Army: The Soviet View*, Moscow, 1972; USAF: *The Armed Forces of the Soviet State*. Moscow, 1975, by Marshal A. Grechko. The basic Soviet approach to the matter is presented in the book by Marshal Sokolovski published in 1962 in Moscow: Marshal V. D. Sokolovski, *Military Strategy, Soviet Doctrine and Concepts* (New York, Praeger, 1963).

3. A picture of Soviet intentions in various areas of the world can be drawn from the book by Douglas and Hoeber, *ibid*. For additional material see: Michael Morgan, "USSR's Minerals as Strategic Weapon in the Future," *Defense and Foreign Affairs*, Washington, D.C., Dec. 1979.

4. Admiral of the Fleet Sergei Gorshkov, *Sea Power and the State*, London, 1979. Morgan, *loc. cit*. General George S. Brown (USAF) C-JCS, Statement to the Congress on the Defense Posture of the United States For Fiscal Year 1979, p. 103; National Security Council, Review of Non-Fuel Mineral Policy, (Washington, D.C. 1979.); Drew Middleton, *The New York Times*, (9/15/79); *Time*, 9/21/80.

5. Elie Kedourie, "The End of the Ottoman Empire," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 3, No. 4, 1968.

6. Al-Thawra, Syria 12/20/79, Al-Ahram, 12/30/79, Al Ba'ath, Syria, 5/6/79. 55% of the Arabs are 20 years old and younger, 70% of the Arabs live in Africa, 55% of the Arabs under 15 are unemployed, 33% live in urban areas, Oded Yinon, "Egypt's Population Problem," *The Jerusalem Quarterly*, No. 15, Spring 1980.

7. E. Kanovsky, "Arab Haves and Have Nots," *The Jerusalem Quarterly*, No.1, Fall 1976, Al Ba'ath, Syria, 5/6/79.

8. In his book, former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said that the Israeli government is in fact responsible for the design of American policy in the Middle East, after June '67, because of its own indecisiveness as to the future of the territories and the inconsistency in its positions since it established the background for Resolution 242 and certainly twelve years later for the Camp David agreements and the peace treaty with Egypt. According to Rabin, on June 19, 1967, President Johnson sent a letter to Prime Minister Eshkol in which he did not mention anything about withdrawal from the new territories but exactly on the same day the government resolved to return territories in exchange for peace. After the Arab resolutions in Khartoum (9/1/67) the government altered its position but contrary to its decision of June 19, did not notify the U.S. of the alteration and the U.S. continued to support 242 in the Security Council on the basis of its earlier understanding that Israel is prepared to return territories. At that point it was already too late to change the U.S. position and Israel's policy. From here the way was opened to peace agreements on the basis of 242 as was later agreed upon in Camp David. See Yitzhak Rabin. *Pinkas Sherut*, (Ma'ariv 1979) pp. 226-227.

9. Foreign and Defense Committee Chairman Prof. Moshe Arens argued in an interview (Ma'ariv, 10/3/80) that the Israeli government failed to prepare an economic plan before the Camp David agreements and was itself surprised by the cost of the agreements, although already during the negotiations it was possible to calculate the heavy price and the serious error involved in not having prepared the economic grounds for peace.

The former Minister of Treasury, Mr. Yigal Holwitz, stated that if it were not for the withdrawal from the oil fields, Israel would have a positive balance of payments (9/17/80). That same person said two years earlier that the government of Israel (from which he withdrew) had placed a noose around his neck. He was referring to the Camp David agreements (Ha'aretz, 11/3/78). In the course of the whole peace negotiations neither an expert nor an economics advisor was consulted, and the Prime Minister himself, who lacks knowledge and expertise in economics, in a mistaken initiative, asked the U.S. to give us a loan rather than a grant, due to his wish to maintain our respect and the respect of the U.S. towards us. See Ha'aretz 1/5/79. *Jerusalem Post*, 9/7/79. Prof Asaf Razin, formerly a senior consultant in the Treasury, strongly criticized the conduct of the negotiations; Ha'aretz, 5/5/79. Ma'ariv, 9/7/79. As to matters concerning the oil fields and Israel's energy crisis, see the interview with Mr. Eitan Eisenberg, a government advisor on these matters, Ma'ariv Weekly, 12/12/78. The Energy Minister, who personally signed the Camp David agreements and the evacuation of Sdeh Alma, has since emphasized the seriousness of our condition from the point of view of oil supplies more than once...see *Yediot Ahronot*, 7/20/79. Energy Minister Modai even admitted that the government did not consult him at all on the subject of oil during the Camp David and Blair House negotiations. Ha'aretz, 8/22/79.

10. Many sources report on the growth of the armaments budget in Egypt and on intentions to give the army preference in a peace epoch budget over domestic needs for which a peace was allegedly obtained. See former Prime Minister Mamduh Salam in an interview 12/18/77, Treasury Minister Abd El Sayeh in an interview 7/25/78, and the paper Al Akhbar, 12/2/78 which clearly stressed that the military budget will receive first priority, despite the peace. This is what former Prime Minister Mustafa Khalil has stated in his cabinet's programmatic document which was presented to Parliament, 11/25/78. See English translation, ICA, FBIS, Nov. 27. 1978, pp. D 1-10. According to these sources, Egypt's military budget increased by 10% between fiscal 1977 and 1978, and the process still goes on. A Saudi source divulged that the Egyptians plan to increase their military budget by 100% in the next two years; Ha'aretz, 2/12/79 and *Jerusalem Post*, 1/14/79.

11. Most of the economic estimates threw doubt on Egypt's ability to reconstruct its economy by 1982. See Economic Intelligence Unit, 1978 Supplement, "The Arab Republic of Egypt"; E. Kanovsky, "Recent Economic Developments in the Middle East," *Occasional Papers*, The Shiloah Institution, June 1977;



HOW THEY MURDERED THE UN ENVOY COUNT BERNADOTTE

COMMENT ILS ONT ASSASSINÉ L'ENVOYÉ DES NATIONS UNIES  
LE COMTE BERNADOTTE

## **In the Shadow of Stern: The Inside Story of a LEHI Intelligence Officer**

by Arno Weinstein

DURING THE early days of Israel's formation as an independent nation, there were those who saw the Jewish quest of two thousand years as a diplomatic struggle, and there were those for whom it meant war.

It may be that history has yet to judge the more critical of the two, for each position developed followers that continue to struggle with each other, as they did from the earliest years of the Zionist mission.

Those elements within the nascent Jewish State that relied on the violent removal of foreign powers from Mandate Palestine included the Fighters for Freedom of Israel (LEHI). The organization was founded by Avraham Stern and sought the liberation of Eretz Israel and the establishment of an autonomous Jewish polity.

This is the story of one intelligence officer of the LEHI. His name is Stanley Goldfoot. South African by birth, Mr. Goldfoot today resides in Jerusalem, and remains ever vigilant of Israel's future. The editors of B'tzedek were granted an interview with Mr. Goldfoot in an attempt to better understand one of the more dramatic events in the history of the LEHI and the nation of Israel. That event was the execution of United Nations' mediator Count Folke Bernadotte in the fall of 1948.

### **Background**

I met Avraham Stern. I only met him twice, unfortunately. The Jews gave him away. The British pulled the trigger -- they shot him -- but the British would have never had found him, never without Jewish collaboration. I listened to him, he gave a talk on the 'Future State, and How Can We Spread Our Membership without Diluting It.' That was one of the big things with him -- to try and spread, but not dilute. That's what he told me. Stern was a great man, you could feel his presence; he radiated a certain confidence, an understanding. It was a great loss to the Jewish people when Stern was murdered." Stanley Goldfoot's dedication to the words and memory of Avraham Stern are as strong today as they were in the years prior to, and during, the formation of the Jewish State, when the goal of the LEHI was the liberation of Eretz Israel and the establishment of the Third Commonwealth.

For Stanley Goldfoot there was no alternative other than to be part of Avraham Stern's organization. LEHI appealed to me -- it was freedom. It's intellectual level was high; their ambitions, and their aims were noble. I believed that there should be a Jewish State. We'd seen the tragedy of Hitler. We'd seen what happened in Europe. It wasn't over yet, it was during the war, of course. We saw what was happening -- millions of Jews being killed."

As a young English-speaking immigrant to British Mandate Palestine, Stanley Goldfoot was particularly suited for his activities as an intelligence officer in an illegal, underground organization.

One of his more successful schemes during his years as a LEHI fighter was the founding of a scholarly journal concerning itself with the Middle East. Through these unsuspecting and lawful means, Goldfoot was able to secure press credentials as a foreign correspondent. With the unknowing aid of such figures as Abba Eban, Goldfoot created a ruse upon which the most up-to-date British military intelligence was at his disposal. The information he gathered not

only went toward the publishing of articles in his journal, but additionally, and more importantly, directly to the LEHI high-command in Tel Aviv. Goldfoot was present at all press briefings by the British Mandate Authority and later United Nations' personnel and had virtually unlimited access to the key figures dominating the scene. Freedom of movement in a Jerusalem frequently subject to curfews was an additional benefit of press credentials and his journal. Goldfoot was able to gather intelligence information for his clandestine organization as well as be in places restricted to the ordinary Jewish citizen.

"We had some good times. The days were never long enough. You know, the journal alone was a full time project," remembers Goldfoot. "The Journal of the Middle East Society was created with a friend, [Nachum] Nimri. He was a pal and also a member of Stern. We worked together most of the time and he was also general secretary of Chevrat Ashlag, the Palestine Potash Company.

"We saw that the press, the foreign press especially, was a wonderful way o sources of information, because all these people were dying to be interviewed - dying to be - and a press man could get in anywhere at that time with no restrictions. Press people were excluded from every military curfew."

For Goldfoot and his associates the conclusion was obvious, "So we decided that we would make our own magazine, our own journal, which would enable us to go when and where we liked. I went to Syria with the journal, I went to Beirut many times, because a press man could go anywhere. It was a special category. We got our funds from membership.

"We invited Abba Eban to a meeting and said 'let's form this journal, Journal of the Middle East,' and he thought it was a brilliant idea. Eban was unaware of the journal's real purpose - he really thought it was a scholarly journal - and that it was, as well.

"We had press passes, we could go anywhere with [them], night or day. And there was no such thing as a curfew for the holders of press passes. Once, I remember, Tel Aviv was under a three day curfew. Well, no problem, I could drive to Tel Aviv and bring messages, meet my friends.

"We got in entries from all over the world. Abba Eban was very thrilled with writing it [the Objectives and Purposes of the journal] up. It went as follows. "Goldfoot picked up a yellowed, but well preserved copy of the publication he had fished out of a back room closet and began to read.

"The Middle East Society of Jerusalem was founded in January of 1946 to provide a forum for the free exchange of ideas and opinions on the problems of the Middle East. One of the society's objectives is to publish a periodical to reflect the scope and range of the society's interests. Publications dealing with these subjects are mostly edited in Western countries by specialists who have no direct current link with the area they investigate. But proximity, like detachment, has its virtue, and it would be surprising if men and women, who were able to contemplate the Middle Eastern scene from its very center had nothing of merit to contribute to the general good. This journal, while welcoming those afar, is preeminently the expression of those close at hand. Orientalists, archaeologists, antiquarians, sociologists, and historians are living here amongst their own material which they can scrutinize without impediment of distance. They can attune the process of research to a wider sense of local urgencies, and are well placed for a comparative study of Middle Eastern conditions. The object of this journal is to provide them with their opportunity.

"This journal will accept for publication all opinions while committing itself to none. And certainly, no contributions which have merit as research will be excluded on any grounds of political predilections. Controversy is in the Middle-Eastern air, but it is possible to rise above it into clearer realms of honest thought, where men of diverse views can meet in harmony. The geographical purview of this journal is limited to the Arabic speaking countries, Turkey and Persia, but conditions and events on the fringes of this area must effect its life directly, so that no physical frontiers can be rigidly defined. The editors have devoted much anxious thought to the question whether turbulence of our present state offers a congenial occasion for launching this project. They have considered that the difficulties of the times should be interpreted as a challenge, not as a deterrent. The habits of objective thought may assist the peoples of the Middle East to achieve a deeper harmony amongst themselves and a clearer sense of kinship with the wider world."

Beaming with pride, Goldfoot ended his reading, looked up and smiled. He said, "The journal was read all over the world - England, Saudi Arabia. It was brilliant, if I do say so myself, and Eban had no idea what we were really up to."

"According to Goldfoot, one example of the value of his position was the intelligence he provided to the Irgun prior to the bombing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. "I wasn't involved with the actual bombing of the King David Hotel. I helped to plan it, but had nothing to do with the carrying out of the action. We did cooperate with the Irgun. We cooperated to a certain extent, but don't forget, at the time of the split there was a lot of bitterness between the two sections [Irgun "Alef" and "Bet"] because they didn't believe [in attacking the British while the Allies were still at war with Nazi Germany], Begin especially, said we have to cooperate - and collaborate with the British. But we said that we don't, for they are our enemy. Begin refused to say that the British are our enemy. He never said that. And [Avraham] Stern said that the British are our number one enemy. They wanted to beat Hitler, and so did we. And Begin said let's help the British beat Hitler, because he's the one to get. He never thought of the British as the enemy, at the time. That was the difference."

### **To Liberate Jerusalem**

One of the main objectives of the LEHI in Jerusalem and the young Stanley Goldfoot was the total liberation of Jerusalem from both Arab and international hands. In the late summer and early autumn months of 1948 the New City of Jerusalem was still considered Israeli-occupied territory while the Old City still remained firmly in the control of the Jordanian Arab Legion. For LEHI, the battle for Jerusalem meant not only the capture of the Old City, but the holding on to the New City. Jerusalem represented the restoration of true Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel. The LEHI considered Jerusalem the eternal capital of the Jewish nation upon which all hopes and dreams of redemption rested. All those who stood in the way of a liberated Jerusalem were viewed as acceptable targets by the LEHI fighters.

In the 1948 attempt to gain the Old City of Jerusalem by the regular Jewish army forces (against the orders of David Ben-Gurion), the LEHI had greater plans of destroying the Dome of the Rock Muslim shrine and rebuilding the Third Jewish Temple once the area was taken. With the failure of the Jewish advance on the Old City, the Sternist dream was not to be realized. However, they were determined to secure all of the new sections of Jerusalem as the capital of the state. Standing in the way of such a declaration was the world community's desire to settle the conflict over Jerusalem by internationalizing the city. The representative of "internationalization plan" was the United Nations' forces stationed in the region.

For the members of the LEHI, Count Folke Bernadotte, as UN mediator for "Palestine," came to symbolize the foreign oppression of the Jewish claim to the Land of Israel.

On August 10, 1948, a demonstration was held in front of the Belgian Consulate in Jerusalem, against Bernadotte, that was intended to embarrass the new Jewish government. The LEHI voiced their opposition to United Nations' policies specifying Count Bernadotte as their target. LEHI members, lead by Israel Eldad, carried signs reading "Remember Lord Moyne!" (a direct reference to the successful execution of the British Mandate official in Cairo by the LEHI) and "Stockholm Is Yours; Jerusalem Is Ours!" (referring to Bernadotte's native capital). The event was peacefully disbanded by the recently appointed commander of Israeli troops in Jerusalem, Moshe Dayan. With this event, LEHI made their position clear naming Bernadotte as the prime target in their opposition to international forces in Jerusalem.

Bernadotte had advocated a total demilitarization of Jerusalem and blamed the Jewish forces for "aggressive" behavior in the city. Jerusalem was under regular bombardment from Arab irregulars, as well as subject to sniping attacks from the occupied Arab sections. While Bernadotte turned a blind eye to the Arab infractions of the imposed international truce, he found any Jewish response as provocative and inciteful.

Bernadotte refused to dignify Jewish resistance to the "Bernadotte Plan" to internationalize Jerusalem. From all evidence available, Bernadotte did not consider himself in any danger, ignoring LEHI placards throughout Jerusalem demanding that he leave the country and remove the international presence impeding Jewish control of the city. Bernadotte saw LEHI demands as unworthy chatter of extremists. Continued threats to his life were also ignored by the aristocratic Count.

Bernadotte was on record with his vision for the Middle East. He outlined his plan for the future of the Land of Israel, as the United Nations' head mediator, on numerous occasions.

Bernadotte's position was summarized in the United Nations General Assembly "Progress Report of the United Nations Mediator on Palestine" (A. 648) 18 September, 1948, submitted to the Secretary General for Transmission to the Members of the United Nations [the day following his death].

Bernadotte on the subject of Partition:

1. The resolution Adopted by the General Assembly on 29 November 1947 provided not for simple partition of Palestine, but for partition with economic union. It envisaged the creation of an Arab State, a Jewish State, and the City of Jerusalem as a corpus separatum under a special international regime administered by the United Nations. These three entities, largely because of justifiable doubts concerning the economic viability of the proposed Arab State and the City of Jerusalem, were to be linked together in an Economic Union of Palestine. The obvious disadvantages of territorial partition were thus to be corrected to some extent by economic union. [Part I, Pg. 5]

24. As Mediator, I had to seek possible solutions which would be voluntarily accepted by both parties. I sought, therefore, arrangements which might reveal some common denominator in the relations between Arabs and Jews in Palestine. In my talks with them, both parties freely admitted the utter necessity for peaceful relations between Arabs and Jews in Palestine, and both admitted the importance of economic unity in the country. " [Part I, Pg. 13]

Bernadotte on the subject of The Jewish State:

5. The most significant development in the Palestine scene since last November is the fact that the Jewish State is a living, solidly entrenched, vigorous reality. That it enjoys de jure or de facto recognition from an increasing number of States, two of which are permanent members of the Security Council, is an incidental but arresting fact. The Provisional Government of Israel is today exercising, without restrictions on its authority or power, all the attributes of full sovereignty. The Jewish State was not born in peace as was hoped for in the resolution of 29 November, but rather, like many another State in history, in violence and bloodshed. The establishment of this State constitutes the only implementation which has been given to their solution, and even this was accomplished by a procedure quite contrary to that envisaged for the purpose in the resolution. In establishing their State within a semi-circle of gunfire, the Jews have given a convincing demonstration of their skill and tenacity.

6. As I pointed out in my report to the Security Council of 12 July (s/888, pages 16-17), the Jewish State is:

'a small State, precariously perched on a coastal shelf with its back to the sea and defiantly facing on three sides a hostile Arab world. Its future may be assessed as uncertain, and if it survives this war, its security will be likely to present a serious problem for a good time to come . . . . ' [Part I, Pg. 6]

Bernadotte on the subject of Jewish immigration:

13. The issue of Jewish immigration remains a burning issue in Palestine, but in the very nature of the case it is submerged in the larger issue of the existence of the Jewish State. It is entirely natural that the Jewish position, insistent upon a fully sovereign Jewish State to determine its own immigration policy. The Arabs, on the other hand, rejecting entirely the concept of the Jewish State, would also deny the right of Jewish immigration into an Arab-dominated Palestine. The settlement of the issue of the Jewish State will minimize the international importance of the immigration issue. The Jews, however, in the interest of promoting friendly relations with their Arab neighbors, would do well, in defining their immigration policy, to take carefully into account the basis of Arab fears and to consider measures and policies designed to allay them. [Part I, Pg. 9]

9. The Provisional Government of Israel, in a letter dated 5 July 1948, objected to the deviations from the General Assembly resolution of 29 November 1947, and particularly to the suggestions concerning the regulation of immigration and the status of Jerusalem. They offered no counter suggestions but urged a reconsideration of my "whole approach to the problem. " [Part I, Pg. 14]

... should unrestricted immigration indefinitely continue in Palestine there might in the future arise a serious economic and political problem beyond the control of any Jewish Government. It cannot be ignored that immigration affects not only the Jewish State and the Jewish people but also the surrounding Arab World. [Part I, Pg. 15]

Bernadotte on the subject of Jerusalem:

Jerusalem stands in the heart of what must be Arab territory in any partition of Palestine. To attempt to isolate this area politically and otherwise from surrounding territory presents enormous difficulties. Moreover, while I fully appreciate that the question of Jerusalem is of great concern, for historical and other reasons, to the Jewish community of Palestine, Jerusalem was never intended to be a part of the Jewish State. [Part I, Pg. 15]

#### VI. The Resolution of the General Assembly of 29 November 1947 Arab and Jewish Attitudes

1. General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 provided for the partition of Palestine into a Jewish State, an Arab State and an international territory of the City of Jerusalem, within the framework of an economic union embracing all three. This plan was accepted by the representatives of the Jewish Agency but rejected by the Arab States and the spokesman of the Higher Arab Committee, who declared that they did not consider themselves bound by the resolution. On 14 May 1948, the Jews declared the existence of a State of Israel, and when on the following day the Mandate officially ended, the newly-proclaimed Provisional Government of Israel claimed that it was acting according to that resolution as far as circumstances permitted, and that it made no claim to territory beyond the boundaries of the partition resolution of 29 November.

2. The Arab States, on the other hand, claiming that the resolution of the Assembly was illegal and unjust, contended that they had come legitimately to the assistance of the Arabs of Palestine. Their opposition to the resolution of 29 November has continued unabated.

3. The Provisional Government of Israel, according to recent pronouncements, has apparently modified its attitude to the resolution of 29 November. Although the general position of the Provisional Government of Israel rests broadly on the foundation of the Assembly resolution, it is now being urged that boundaries should be modified to take more fully into account both the present military situation and the necessity for more readily defensible frontiers. In regard to Jerusalem, there is a more skeptical attitude towards internationalization and a marked tendency to press for the inclusion of at least the Jewish part of Jerusalem in the State of Israel. [Part I, Pg. 25]

#### **The Execution**

"We intend to kill Bernadotte and any other United Nations' observers who come to Jerusalem," Goldfoot told C. L. Sulzberger of The New York Times less than two months before the execution. The brash young men and women of the LEHI did not make idle threats. Plans had already been in the works to rid Eretz Israel of foreign personnel with Count Bernadotte at the top of the list.

And so it came on Friday, September 17, 1948 the command structure of the LEHI began preparations for their assault on Bernadotte and his execution. Count Bernadotte was stationed at the United Nations' Headquarters on the island of Rhodes. From Rhodes, Bernadotte would make his trips to the region and inspect the UN forces occupying the Land of Israel. Aware that Bernadotte was to be in Jerusalem on September 17th, the LEHI high-command in Tel Aviv gave the order for his execution.

Bernadotte's itinerary was public information, however, Goldfoot knew that the Count's actual movements in Jerusalem would be changed as a matter of standard procedure. The only persons, aside from UN personnel and the Hagana military guards protecting Bernadotte, that were privy to the changes, would be the press, at a last minute briefing. Goldfoot, as a member



of the press, therefore waited at the Government Press Office for the most up-to-date "revised" schedule of Count Bernadotte's activities.

According to Goldfoot, "Bernadotte was to be transported from the United Nations' headquarters in the Talpote section of Jerusalem after he arrived from Rhodes. From the airport to the headquarters in Talpote, he would be driven by the Hagana convoy and transported to the center of new Jerusalem. First, to the Belgian Consulate, on Marcus square, and from there, to the YMCA. From this information we figured out that he should be leaving the High Commissioner's residence [Talpote] at about four o'clock.

"He would be in Talpote. As opposed to what they [the Israel Government Press Agency] had listed on the official itinerary. All the press people, none of them waited for the "revised" update -- were running like mad to Mandlebaum Gate [in the Old City], the idiots, to wait for him. I came back to the camp [LEHI headquarters in Jerusalem] and said to Meir [Zetler, LEHI commander in Jerusalem], 'Here's the thing -- four o'clock we have to be there. He'll be coming up the hill at four o'clock.' That's exactly what happened."

Three vehicles were used in the operation. Two lead cars, one with Meir Zetler and one with Goldfoot who directed the activities. A jeep was used to transport those who were to actually carry out the execution.

"We got four LEHI members into a jeep and stopped the jeep just off the main road coming uphill.

"Meir Zetler and I drove ahead in other cars and pointed the jeep as to where to wait. The jeep pulled across the road, stopped the convoy. Everybody [LEHI Fighters] was dressed in Khaki and looked like army troops. Each one carried a gun, a shmietzer, a German shmietzer, which is a very efficient gun. Yehoshua Cohen walked up to the second car in the Bernadotte convoy, everybody knows that the VIPs don't travel in the first car, and he said to the guy, sitting next to the driver, 'Count Bernadotte?' And when he replied, 'Yes,' Yehoshua fired at Bernadotte. He shot him dead on the spot. And unfortunately, Colonel Serout, the French officer, sitting next to him also got it. It was unintentional. He got back in the jeep when he was absolutely sure that the fellow couldn't possibly survive after what he had gotten and drove off. Just as a side note, the Hagana guard assigned to escort Bernadotte didn't have any knowledge of what the LEHI was up to. A guy by the name of Hilman was the poor fellow who pointed out Bernadotte to us.

"No one could do anything. What could they [the troops guarding Bernadotte] do? What could they do? It was such a shock. Such a surprise. Nobody knew what had happened. Somebody would go and shoot Bernadotte in the heart of Jerusalem? This was the point.

"Meir Zetler was watching up on top of the hill where the Van Leer Institute is now. It was just an empty hill then. Meir rushed back to the camp and I went back to the camp later. He packed up all sorts of papers and began to burn all sorts of documents. He already arranged a hiding place for himself and another fellow, 'Shika' -- who had been sentenced to be hanged by the British. He was due to be hanged in Jerusalem, in the Jerusalem Prison next to the Russian compound, he was acting as our secretary then. He was never hanged by the British because they left [Eretz Israel] on the 13th of May, and his date for hanging, I think, was a number of days later in May. His crime was for carrying arms. He was caught after an action.

"Anyway, the four in the jeep drove to the camp, picked up some of the things they needed and went off to where they had a hiding place. I did not have a hiding place, because Meir told me, 'Stanley, you wait for them. You wait for the army and talk to them.' So I waited there that night while the others hid, but the next morning the army didn't come. We had been under siege in Jerusalem. We had trouble getting food. We had to use grass to make soup -- from weeds and grass and so on. We had to queue up for water. And all the children as well. The Jerusalem-Tel Aviv road was cut by the Arabs. But this [Bernadotte's execution] happened on Friday at ten past five. By ten past eight, Saturday morning, an Israeli convoy of tanks came through with artillery. How did they get through? They didn't try to save Jerusalem before the execution. The Israel Army came through -- with no problems because of the hysteria created by the events.

"Back then the army had not gone through a politicization. The army was great then. The Palmach, however, was different. The Palmach people were taught differently. Trained differently. Different outlook. They were more international. They weren't so Jewish. You didn't see any kippot in the Palmach. You didn't see any religious ceremonies of any kind. You did in the Hagana. There was nothing really Jewish about the Palmach. Wingate trained them,



# ISRAEL'S SACRED TERRORISM

by **Livia Rokach**

A study based on Moshe Sharett's Personal Diary, and other documents.

Foreword by **Noam Chomsky** (Third Edition)

To all the Palestinian victims of Israel's unholy terrorism, whose sacrifice, suffering and ongoing struggle will yet prove to be the pangs of the rebirth of Palestine...

## FOREWORD

by **Noam Chomsky**

HISTORY, particularly recent history, is characteristically presented to the general public within the framework of a doctrinal system based on certain fundamental dogmas. In the case of the totalitarian societies, the point is too obvious to require comment. The situation is more intriguing in societies that lack cruder forms of repression and ideological control. The United States, for example, is surely one of the least repressive societies of past or present history with respect to freedom of inquiry and expression. Yet only rarely will an analysis of crucial historical events reach a wide audience unless it conforms to certain doctrines of the faith.

"The United States always starts out with good intentions." With this ritual incantation, a liberal critic of American interventionism enters the area of permissible debate, of thinkable thoughts (in this case, William Pfaff, "Penalty of Interventionism," *International Herald Tribune*, February 1979). To accept the dogma, a person who is unable to tolerate more than a limited degree of internal contradiction must studiously avoid the documentary record, which is ample in a free society- for example, the record of high-level planning exhibited in the Pentagon Papers, particularly the record of the early years of U.S. involvement in the 1940s and early 1950s when the basic outlines of strategy were developed and formulated. Within the scholarly professions and the media the intelligentsia can generally be counted on to close ranks; they will refuse to submit to critical analysis the doctrines of the faith, prune the historical and documentary record so as to insulate these doctrines from examination, and proceed to present a version of history that is safely free from institutional critique or analysis. Occasional departures from orthodoxy are of little moment as long as they are confined to narrow circles that can be ignored, or dismissed as "irresponsible" or "naïve" or "failing to comprehend the complexities of history," or otherwise identified with familiar code-words as beyond the pale.

Though relations between Israel and the United States have not been devoid of conflict, still there is no doubt that there has been, as is often said, a "special relationship." This is obvious at the material level, as measured by flow of capital and armaments, or as measured by diplomatic support, or by joint operations, as when Israel acted to defend crucial U.S. interests in the Middle East at the time of the 1970 crisis involving Jordan, Syria and the Palestinians. The special relationship appears at the ideological level as well. Again with rare

exceptions, one must adopt certain doctrines of the faith to enter the arena of debate, at least before any substantial segment of the public.

The basic doctrine is that Israel has been a hapless victim-of terrorism, of military attack, of implacable and irrational hatred. It is not uncommon for well-informed American political analysts to write that Israel has been attacked four times by its neighbors, including even 1956. Israel is sometimes chided for its response to terrorist attack, a reaction that is deemed wrong though understandable. The belief that Israel may have had a substantial role in initiating and perpetuating violence and conflict is expressed only far from the mainstream, as a general rule. In discussing the backgrounds of the 1956 war, Nadav Safran of Harvard University, in a work that is fairer than most, explains that Nasser "seemed bent on mobilizing Egypt's military resources and leading the Arab countries in an assault on Israel." The Israeli raid in Gaza in February 1955 was "retaliation" for the hanging of Israeli saboteurs in Egypt-it was only six years later, Safran claims, that it became known that they were indeed Israeli agents. The immediate background for the conflict is described in terms of fedayeen terror raids and Israeli retaliation. The terror organized by Egyptian intelligence "contributed significantly to Israel's decision to go to war in 1956 and was the principal reason for its refusal to evacuate the Gaza Strip" (*Israel - The Embattled Ally*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978).

To maintain such doctrines as these, or the analysis of alleged fact that conform to them, it is necessary scrupulously to avoid crucial documentation. Safran, in his 600-page study, makes no use of major sources such as the diaries that Livia Rokach reviews here, relevant parts of which had been made public in 1974, or the captured Egyptian documents published in Israel in 1975, or other sources that undermine these analyses (see footnotes 19, 20). Much the same is true of the mainstream scholarly literature and journalism fairly generally.

Moshe Sharett's diary, to which Livia Rokach's monograph is devoted, is undoubtedly **a major documentary source**. It remains outside of "official history"-that version of history that reaches more than a tiny audience of people unsatisfied by conventional doctrine. It is only reasonable to predict that this will remain true in the United States as long as the "special relationship" persists. If, on the other hand, Israel had been, say, an ally of the Soviet Union, then Sharett's revelations would quickly become common knowledge, just as no one would speak of the Egyptian attack on Israel in 1956.

In studying the process of policy formation in any state, it is common to find a rough division between relatively hard-line positions that urge the use of force and violence to attain state ends, and "softer" approaches that advocate diplomatic or commercial methods to attain the same objectives -- a distinction between "the Prussians" and "the traders," to borrow terms that Michael Klare has suggested in his work on U.S. foreign policy. The goals are basically the same; the measures advocated differ, at least to a degree, a fact that may ultimately bear on the nature of the ends pursued. Sharett was an advocate of the "soft" approach. His defeat in internal Israeli politics reflected the ascendancy of the positions of Ben Gurion, Dayan and others who were not reluctant to use force to attain their goals. His diaries give a very revealing picture of the developing conflict, as he perceived it, and offer an illuminating insight into the early history of the state of Israel, with ramifications that reach to the present, and beyond. Livia Rokach has performed a valuable service in making this material readily available, for the first time, to those who are interested in discovering the real world that lies behind "official history."

Noam Chomsky, January 1, 1980

## PREFACE TO THIS EDITION

by **Naseer H. Aruri**

IN PURSUIT of its objectives of disseminating accurate information about the Middle East, the Association of Arab-American University Graduates, Inc. thought it in the public interest to publish this study, which analyzes Israeli-Arab relations in the late 1940s and 1950s

in the light of the personal diary of Moshe Sharett. [1] Head of the Jewish Agency's Political Department from 1933 to 1948, Sharett became Israel's first foreign minister ( 1948 1956), under David Ben Gurion), and was prime minister in 1954 and 1955.

Since this book was first published five years ago, a number of occurrences have taken place that point up its enduring significance. Although this work deals primarily with events of the 1950s, it is of more than historical interest. Indeed, the information it provides makes it clear that the record of the past quarter century could easily have been predicted; the only novel quality is the ferocity with which the Zionist strategy of the fifties has been carried out in the decades that followed. No longer does the Zionist movement feel compelled to hide its true intentions. Its regional alliances with the Phalanges party and other right-wing elements in South Lebanon, and its special relationship with the United States, propel it like a juggernaut in pursuit of imperial goals.

The first edition of this book appeared when the Middle East and the United States were preoccupied with the Egyptian-Israeli negotiations that led to the 1978 Camp David Accords and the Egyptian-Israeli treaty of March 1979, and with the Israeli Invasion of South Lebanon of March 1978. Subsequently, the Camp David formula not only has failed to produce the comprehensive settlement promised by President Jimmy Carter, it in fact contributed to a second Israeli invasion of Lebanon in, June 1982. By neutralizing Egypt, the Egyptian-Israeli treaty allowed Israel to proceed confidently with its plans to crush Palestinian resistance and obliterate the Palestinian national identity, with a view to perpetuating its occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Golan Heights. Today, the Palestine question is further from a peaceful and just resolution than at any time in the past, while Lebanon continues to hemorrhage and to divide along sectarian lines.

The Camp David Accords, and the subsequent Reagan Plan introduced in September 1982, were grounded in flawed assumptions about Israel's "security" and Arab threats to that security. Recent developments in the region have exposed the Reagan administration's complicity in the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, [2] which was calculated to produce results deemed beneficial both to American strategic interests and to Israeli expansionist goals. The interests of the Reagan administration and Israel's Likud government coalesced around three objectives: the destruction of the Palestinian infrastructure in Lebanon, the redrawing of the political map in Lebanon, and the reduction of Syria to manageable proportions. Pax Americana and pax Israelica were to be realized through the campaign cynically dubbed "Peace for Galilee."

The 1982 "operation," as well as its predecessor, the "Litani Operation" of 1978, were part of the long-standing Zionist strategy for Lebanon and Palestine, which this transition of the Sharett diary illuminates. In fact, that strategy, formulated and applied during the 1950s, had been envisaged at least four decades earlier, and attempts to implement it are still being carried out three decades later. On November 6, 1918, a committee of British mandate officials and Zionist leaders put forth a suggested northern boundary for a Jewish Palestine "from the North Litani River up to Banias." In the following year, at the Paris peace conference, the Zionist movement proposed boundaries that would have included the Lebanese district of Bint Jubayl and all the territories up to the Litani River. The proposal emphasized the "vital importance of controlling all water resources up to their sources."

During the Paris conference, Chaim Weizmann and David Ben Gurion (who later became, respectively, Israel's first president and first prime minister) attempted to persuade Patriarch Hayik, who headed the Lebanese delegation, to abandon South Lebanon in return for a promise of technical and financial assistance to develop the area to the north, which they hoped, would become a Christian state.

The Zionist military forces that invaded Palestine in 1948 also occupied part of the district of Marjayun and Bint Jubayl, and reached the vicinity of the Litani River, but were forced to withdraw under international pressure. Then, in 1954, the leaders of the newly established state of Israel renewed Zionist claims on Lebanese water when President Eisenhower's envoy Eric Johnston proposed a formula of sharing the Litani waters among Lebanon, Syria and Israel. Israel, in fact, threatened to use force against Lebanon to prevent the utilization of the Litani waters to develop South Lebanon.

While these threats were made during the period covered in the Sharett diary, consider what actually happened later, during the 1960s, '70s, '80s: In 1967, Israel's war against three Arab states not only gave Israel possession of eastern Palestine (the West Bank), Gaza, the Sinai and the Syrian Golan Heights, but also enabled Israel to capture the headwaters of the Jordan and Manias rivers. In addition, Israel destroyed Jordan's East Ghor Canal and its Khaled Dam on the Yarmuk River, which flows into Israel's Nahariva Pool. In the 1978 "Litani Operation," Israel established firm control over the Wazzani River, which flows into the Jordan,

as well as almost the entire length of the Hasbani River. And in the 1982 "Operation Peace for Galilee," the entire length of the Litani River came under Israeli control." [3]

The goal of profoundly altering water distribution in the region could be achieved only within the context of a vassal state in Lebanon with a puppet government, an endeavor about which the Sharett diary has much to say (p. 22 ff). In fact, Ben Gurion's plan, in 1954, to establish such a puppet governments plan enthusiastically endorsed by Moshe Dayan was finally put in motion nearly a quarter of a century later. Dayan's "officer" did indeed emerge, even bearing the same rank of "just a major" Major Sa'd Haddad, whom Israel encouraged to proclaim secession from Lebanon in April 1979. Israel's defense minister, Ezer Weizmann, announced his government's support of Haddad's canton of "Free Lebanon": "I consider Haddad a Lebanese nationalist and as far as I know he wants Beirut to become the capital of a free independent Lebanon once more without interference from the Syrians or the Palestinians." [4] Support for Haddad, and by implication for a Zionist-Phalangist alliance, was also voiced by right-wing Lebanese politicians. Stated Camille Chamoun, "We need such a Lebanese force to struggle in the South for the liberation of Lebanon, and not just a part of Lebanon, and Sa'd Haddad is not a traitor."

But the Zionist proxy "mini-state," which was set up in a border strip six miles wide and sixty miles long, was repudiated by the world community. A United Nations force, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), was mandated to help reestablish the authority of the central Lebanese government in the South. Israel, however, defied the relevant United Nations resolution (which was supported even by the Carter administration) and persisted in its support of Haddad. After a March 1981 agreement by the Syrian and Lebanese presidents to reassert – in cooperation with UNIFIL – the authority of the Beirut government in the South, Israel and Haddad's militia bombarded a UNIFIL position, killing three Nigerian soldiers (March 16, 1981).

Israel's destabilization of Lebanon, in pursuit of a Maronite-dominated client state, has taken several forms, ranging from extending the Camp David formula to Lebanon, to its full-scale invasion of 1982. With regard to imposing a Camp David solution on Lebanon, Menachem Begin made a statement to the Israeli parliament on May 7, 1979, inviting Lebanon to enter into negotiations with Israel on the basis of Syrian withdrawal and expulsion of the Palestinians from Lebanon. This proposal evoked an enthusiastic response from Bashir Gemayel, commander of the Phalangist Lebanese Forces, who told Beirut's Monday Morning on May 28, 1979:

"These principles are sound and should be accepted is the basis for any Lebanese endeavor to find a solution... President Sadat accepted a similar proposal and he is now leading Egypt to an era of welfare and prosperity. When shall Lebanon be allowed the right to seek its own welfare?"

The elder Gemayel, Pierre, added:

"You shall say that I am defending Sadat as I defended Sa'd Haddad; my dear, I would be a coward and without honor if I did not defend my point of view" (Al-Safir, August 2, 1979)

Israel's aggression against Lebanon in 1982 was clearly designed to cement these alliances between Israel and the "Major" in the South and with the Gemayels and Chamouns to the North – all in an effort to secure the balkanization and vassalization of Lebanon, the eradication of Palestinian nationalism, and the intimidation of Syria. To attain these goals, Israeli leaders were willing to risk a wider regional war, and indeed to push the world to what is in every respect a "pre-nuclear" situation. This alone should give the American people cause for concern and action. In addition, the United States has provided Israel with the economic and military means to invade Lebanon, to bomb Baghdad, and to perpetuate the occupation of Palestine and of Syrian territory in clear violation of U.S. law, including the Arms Export Control Act of 1976 and the Israel-U.S. Mutual Defense Agreement of 1952. [5]

The 1982 Israeli invasion so tipped the domestic balance in favor of Israel's Lebanese allies that the majority of Muslims, nationalists and other anti-Israel groups were left in a clearly submissive condition. The terms of the victor were dictated to the vanquished. Israel's new ally, Bashir Gemayel, was to be president/viceroy of Lebanon, although according to noted American journalist Jonathan Randal, Bashir himself, who owed his presidency to Begin and Sharon, complained that these two treated him like a "vassal." [6] The Shultz agreement of May 17, 1983 was to be Lebanon's Versailles, which would realize the long-standing Zionist dream described in the Sharett diaries a "Christian" state that would ally itself with Israel.

Despite the assassination of President-elect Bashir Gemayel before he could take office, initially matters developed in accordance with Israel's strategy for Lebanon. The negotiations, handled by civilians from the two countries' foreign ministries, appeared to be headed towards normalization along Camp David lines; Israel secured a liaison office in Beirut, the next thing to an embassy; the Phalanges party and its leader's son, Amin Gemayel, now the president of Lebanon, began to reshape the country in their own image. But it soon became clear that sectarian hegemony, sponsored by Israel and supported by the United States, was a poor substitute for even the antiquated confessional system of 1943. By fall 1983, Israeli troops were forced to withdraw to the Allah River. By February 1984, President Reagan ordered U.S. troops to withdraw, while Druze and Shiite fighters made a triumphant entry into Beirut (February 10, 1984). President Amin Gemayel, who owed his presidency to the Israeli invasion, was forced under new political and military conditions to repudiate the Shultz agreement (March 1984) and to close Israel's "embassy" in Beirut (July of the same year).

Not only did the Israeli invasion of 1982 fail to achieve most of its objectives: It pushed the right-wing Lebanese Forces to a position that borders on fascism and renders reunification and reintegration a remote possibility. It has exacerbated the Lebanese civil war at an unbearable cost in human lives and property.

This human tragedy compels us to examine the Israeli rationale of "security," a rubric that has covered a curiously large number of Israeli violations of international law and human rights, recently and in the past. Why, we must ask, does Israel in the West Bank and Gaza Strip close universities, shoot students in classrooms and on the street, deport leaders, dismiss mayors, create colonial settlements and encourage terrorist acts by settlers all in the name of "security?". Why, when confronted with massive popular resistance to its occupation of South Lebanon, did Israel react with the same "Iron Fist," initiating raids on villages, mass arrests of civilians, wide-scale destruction of homes and property, and assassinations even though this policy could only further alienate the population."

The personal diary of Moshe Sharett sheds light on this question by amply documenting the rationale and mechanics of Israel's "Arab policy" in the late 1940s and the 1950s. The policy portrayed, in its most intimate particulars, is one of deliberate Israeli acts of provocation, intended to generate Arab hostility and thus to create pretexts for armed action and territorial expansion. Sharett's records document this policy of "sacred terrorism" and expose the myths of Israel's "security needs" and the "Arab threat" that have been treated like self-evident truths from the creation of Israel to the present, when Israeli terrorism against Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and against Palestinians and Lebanese in South Lebanon, has reached an intolerable level. It is becoming increasingly evident that the exceptional demographic and geographic alterations in Israeli society within the present generation have been brought about, not as the accidental results of the endeavor to guard "Israel's security" against an "Arab threat," but by a drive for lebensraum.

Referring to the terrorist bombings that crippled two prominent West Bank mayors and injured other civilians on June 2, 1980, William Brower, in an article for the New York Times (June 5, 1980), explained the apprehension of West Bank Palestinians: although military occupation is not new to them, Israeli terrorism – if that is what it was – is virtually without precedent in the last thirty years." It behooves Mr. Brower and the attentive public who reads the "news that's fit to print," to examine the many precedents amply documented and occasionally decried by a bewildered Israeli prime minister who worried about the moral deterioration in Israeli society in the 1950s that first prompted revenge as a "sacred" principle. In a passage quoted in Rokach's study, Sharett wrote:

"In the thirties we restrained the emotions of revenge. . . . Now, on the contrary, we justify the system of reprisal ... we have eliminated the mental and moral brake on this instinct and made it possible ... to uphold revenge as a moral value.... a sacred principle" (p. 33).

The undisguised satisfaction that the maiming of the two Palestinian mayors evoked among many Jewish settlers in the West Bank is reminiscent of the feeling in Israel in the 1950s that caused Sharett so much anguish, and challenged his conscience. In fact, the private armies now being organized by Jewish vigilante groups determined to keep the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip under permanent Israeli control, have openly advocated the removal of all Arabs from occupied Palestine. Although these ultra-nationalists consider former Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir (former members of the terrorist Irgun and Stern gangs) to have become patsies, fools and traitors, and although Begin condemned the attacks on the Palestinian mayors as "crimes of the worst kind," the fact remains that the settlers of Gush Emunim and Kach are carrying out the

settlement policies of the Israeli government. This government provides them with the protection and economic benefits and equips them with legitimacy. By the same token, it ensures that their victims will be defenseless and powerless. The 1948 Deir Yassin massacre, committed by Begin's Irgun Zvei Leumi, and the June 2, 1980 bombing, committed by another vigilante group, are products of the same type of "sacred terrorism."

The thirty-two years that have lapsed in the interim have witnessed innumerable acts of Israeli terror: it hardly seems necessary to recall the aerial bombardment of vital civilian infrastructures in Egypt and Syria in the late 1960s, [7] or the destruction of southern Lebanon in the 1970s and '80s, nor to mention the brutality with which the occupation regime treats the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, or the many assassinations of Palestinian intellectuals in various European capitals in the early 1970s.

A most disturbing phenomenon, which will continue to inhibit the prospects for Palestinian-Israeli coexistence, is the ascendancy of the radical right in Israel. Its orientation towards brute force, its attitude towards Arabs, and its contempt for debate and dissent, leave little room for coexistence. Justifications of acts of terrorism against Palestinian civilians are rampant among members of the political establishment and Jewish settlers. Israel's former Minister of Science and Energy, Yuval Neeman, Knesset member Haim Druckman, former chief of staff Raphael Eytan, and Sephardic chief Rabbi Mordechai Eliahu are on record justifying that kind of terrorism. [8] In July 1985, Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir vowed to work for the early release of convicted Jewish terrorists, whom he described as "excellent people who made a mistake" (Jerusalem Post, July 12, 1985). The propensity for violence against Arabs has been clearly established in interviews of settlers, young and old, by Israeli and Western journalists. [9]

The radical right nowadays speaks outright of dispossession and deportation of Palestinians. Israeli sociologist Yoram Peri wrote in Davar (May 11, 1984) that while Defense Minister Arens and Foreign Minister Shamir speak of annexing the West Bank and Gaza and forging a "pluralistic" society, the extreme right advocates deportation, a term which, four years ago, no one would dare utter. "Hence," he wrote, "the proximity of the right to the Fascist conception of the State."

Another factor that inhibits coexistence is the cavalier manner in which members of the establishment claim sovereignty over the West Bank and Gaza. So contemptuous of the need to argue and convince was Foreign Minister Shamir, that his reply to a question of why Israel lay claims to those territories consisted of one word: "Because!" Israel's Chief Rabbi, Shlomo Goren, has remarked that in religious law retaining the occupied territories takes precedence over the duty to save life. Terms such as "Western Eretz Israel" and "Judea and Samaria," which are being used with more frequency and emphasis, represent a revival of the revisionist Zionist notion that the "land of Israel" also includes modern-day Jordan, and underline Israeli leaders' determination never to relinquish the illegally occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The more the world tries to understand the situation in the Middle East, the more the Zionist organizations in the United States, acting in concert with Israel, try to fog it up. Israel's wars against the Arabs in 1967 and 1982 obliterated its David image and confirmed it as the Goliath of the Middle East. No longer was it possible for the Israeli government to escape public scrutiny, despite all the immunity which it enjoys in the American public arena, as its forces, in the name of "security" for Israeli civilians, carried out the most ruthless aerial bombardment since Vietnam. The U.S. ambassador in Lebanon, whose government used its Security Council veto to protect Israel's war gains in 1982, described their saturation bombing: "There is no pinpoint accuracy against targets in open spaces." The Canadian ambassador said Israel's bombing "would make Berlin of 1944 look like a tea party... it is truly a scene from Dante's Inferno." NBC's John Chancellor said: "I kept thinking of the bombing of Madrid during the Spanish Civil War... we are now dealing with an imperial Israel." Indeed, in their pure murderousness, given the frequent use of phosphorus and cluster bombs, the Israeli bombings of Beirut, **an advanced form of state terrorism**, far outstripped the attacks on Guernica, Coventry and Dresden.

Since this book was first published in 1980, the Zionist movement has responded to the growing criticism of Israeli violence in a hysterical manner. Surveillance, monitoring the activities of Israel's critics in the media, churches and on the campus, intelligence gathering and blacklisting reminiscent of the McCarthy period in the United States, are among the tactics employed recently by Zionist organizations to stifle criticism of Israel. [10] Pinning the anti-Semitic label on critics has become the standard and easiest tactic to preempt rational discussion of public policy regarding Israel and to intimidate would-be critics. The list of victims includes such distinguished individuals as former Senator Charles Percy, the Reverend Jesse Jackson, former Under Secretary of State George Ball, former Congressman Paul Findley, [11]



and many other lesser known individuals who struggle against overwhelming odds to retain a job and secure their livelihood. Menachem Begin's famous remark after the Sabra and Shatila massacres, which defined criticism of Israel as "blood libel against the Jewish people," is a stark example of the trend to equate open criticism with anti-Semitism, even as Israel continues to have trade relations and military cooperation with the most notoriously anti-Semitic regimes in Central and South America. [12] Israel's war against journalists was revealed in the legal suit against NBC's reporting of the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, [13] its repeated allegations that journalists who report news detrimental to Israel do so only in response to Arab "threats," [14] and in the killing of CBS crewmen in South Lebanon, who were covering the implementation of Israel's "Iron Fist" policy (March 21, 1985).

Other hysterical responses to increasing knowledge of the facts of the Middle East conflict have emerged in the writings of propagandists masquerading as scholars. Joan Peters's *From Time Immemorial* [15] turns history on its head by claiming that Jews did not replace native Palestinians, who were allegedly no more than illegal Arab immigrant workers who moved to "where they found work." The absurd and indefensible allegation that there were virtually no Arabs in Palestine prior to the Zionist influx, seems intended to provide a veneer of legitimacy for Israel's increasingly violent efforts to make the myth that there is "no such thing as a Palestinian" a chilling reality.

The Zionist effort to stifle public debate of Israeli actions extended to the present study. After unsuccessful attempts by the Israeli establishment to suppress publication, in Hebrew, of the Sharett diary in Israel, attempts were made by threats of litigation and otherwise to suppress our publication of this study of the diary here in the United States. On April 11, 1980 the AAUG received communication from a well-known law firm in New York requesting in the "firmest manner possible" that we refrain from printing, publishing or otherwise reproducing portions of the diary. The law firm, acting on behalf of the family of the late Moshe Sharett and the Israeli publisher of the diary, threatened to "initiate prompt litigation in a Federal District Court" on the grounds of alleged violation of United States copyright laws.

Subsequently, the AAUG received a telegram from the Sharett family emphasizing that all rights would be vigorously protected if the association published "parts or all of Moshe Sharett's diaries." Anxious transoceanic calls were received by our office from the Israeli media. Our right to publish was questioned, but not on the legal grounds cited by the Sharett family and its legal counsel. Instead, we were hysterically accused of attempting to expose Israel via Sharett in a sensationalist manner. The Israeli newspaper Ma'ariv headlined a front-page story, "Israel's Haters in the U.S.A. translated with No Permission the Diaries of Moshe Sharett" (April 4, 1980). According to former Knesset member Uri Avneri, writing in *Haolam Haze* (September 23, 1980), the Israeli Foreign Ministry initially supported Moshe Sharett's son, Ya'qov, who edited the Hebrew publication of the diary, in his attempt to suppress publication of Livia Rokach's study based on the diary. "But to his disappointment, the Foreign Office did not uphold its support for him. The Jerusalem politicians decided that pursuing a legal course in stopping the dissemination of the book would be a mistake of the first order, since this would give it much more publicity."

Needless to say, our accusers not only prejudged our book before its publication and cast aspersion on the organization and the individuals involved in its production; they also assumed that our publication was an unauthorized translation. In fact, the material quoted as verbatim translations from the Sharett diary or substantially paraphrased from that diary comprises only about one percent of the diary. Rokach's study utilizes excerpts from the Sharett diary to reinforce and illustrate her own thesis.

We are under no illusion that the challenge before us was predominantly legal. After all, what Sharett said in his diary, limited as it is to the Hebrew-speaking public, is very revealing; **it constitutes an indictment of Zionism by the former prime minister of Israel**, and dismantles many erroneous assumptions about the Arab-Israeli conflict. It refutes a three-decade-old dogma and emphasizes the need to reexamine the uncritical support Israel has enjoyed in the West for its policies toward the Arabs. Hence, the Israelis' need to suppress and censor, to withhold relevant and vital information from the public discourse on the Middle East. We are painfully reminded of similar attempts to conceal the fraudulent methods which the United States politico-military establishment employed in its pursuit of the war against the Vietnamese. The ability of the establishment to withhold the truth from the American public prolonged the Vietnam War and aggravated the social, economic, and human problems which resulted from that war. It will be hoped that the deceptive strategy of David Ben Gurion, which Moshe Sharett documented in his day-to-day record, will not be withheld forever from the American public, whose lives are materially affected by events in the Middle East. Thus, in our opinion, *Israel's*

*Sacred Terrorism* has an indisputable significance in the formulation of a healthy and objective policy towards the Middle East.

It is our considered opinion that Sharett's Personal Diary, is a very important historical resource that sheds much light on Israel's policy towards the Arab world, particularly for all of us in the United States who have such a large stake in Middle Eastern developments and the eventual outcome of the conflict. Therefore, the use of Sharett's historical resource for scholarly study does not infringe the copyright laws.

We have taken particular precautions, however, to ensure that our selections have been translated accurately, have not been taken out of context and are not mitigated or contradicted by anything that Sharett wrote elsewhere in the diary. We are also certain that these selections satisfy the "fair use" criteria of United States copyright law:

1. The AALUG is a non-profit, educational organization, which is not publishing this study for commercial exploitation.
2. The nature of Moshe Sharett's diary relates materially to the "right of the public to know."
3. The amount of the copyrighted material reproduced in this publication amounts to no more than one percent of the whole.
4. The economic value of the original work would not suffer from the limited quotations included in our study.

We take comfort in the protection afforded by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution involving freedom of speech and the press and the companion "right of the public to know." The Pentagon Papers were revealed to the public after they had long lain unnoticed in the archives of the American military bureaucracy. The critical nature of their content warranted that they should have been unearthed much earlier than their dramatic appearance. Sharett's startling revelations must not be subjected to the same bureaucratic strangulation, or kept away from the English-reading public so that their usefulness as a factor in Middle East policy is nullified.

Naseer H. Aruri, AAUG Publications Committee November 1985

## Preface Notes

1. Moshe Sharett, *Yoman Ishi* (Personal Diary), edited by Yaqov Sharett (Tel Aviv: Ma'a 1979).
2. For example, upon his retirement in May 1985, U.S. Ambassador to Israel Samuel Lewis revealed that in December 1981 Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon outlined his plans for the impending invasion to U.S. envoy Philip Habib (Washington Post, 24 May 1985).
3. See for example Thomas Stauffer, "Israel Calculates the Price of Peace: Money and Water," *Christian Science Monitor*, 13 January 1982, and "Israel's Water Needs May Erode Path to Peace in Region," *Christian Science Monitor*, 20 January 1982; John Cooley, "Syria Links Pull-Out to Guaranteed Access to Water," *Washington Post*, 8 June 1983; and Leslie C. Schmida, "Israel's Drive for Water," *Link*, 17, 4 (November 1994).
4. Quoted in *al-Nahar* and *al-Sa'ir*, 22 April 1979.
5. Quoted in *The Isolationist-Israeli Alliance Is a Phenomenon that Threatens the Unity of Lebanon*, presented at the World Congress for Solidarity with the Lebanese People, Paris, 16-18 June 1980 (Beirut: Information Bureau of the Lebanese National Movement, 1980), 9.
6. Jonathan C. Randal, *Going All the Way: Christian Warlords, Israeli Adventurers, and the War in Lebanon* (New York: Viking Press, 1983), 10-11.
7. In the late 1960s and the early 1970s, Israeli bombing reduced the Egyptian cities of Suez, Port Said and Ismailia to ghost towns. During the same period Israel carried out repeated air raids against Syria. Following the killing of eleven Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics in 1972, at least 200 people, almost all civilians, were killed in Israeli "reprisal" raids in Syria alone. David Hirst, *The Gun and the Olive Branch* (London: Futura, 1978), 251-252.
8. See articles by Yoram Peri in *Davar*, 11 May 1984. Ya'acov Rahamim in *Ma'ariv*, 14 December 1983, and Mary Curtius, "Israeli Debate: Should Settlers Be Pardoned," *Christian Science Monitor*, 15 July 1985.
9. See, for example, *Christian Science Monitor*, 10 May 1984.
10. At its annual convention in 1984, the Middle East Studies Association called on the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith to "disavow and refrain from" blacklisting practices against scholars and students. For more information on efforts by supporters of Israel to quash open debate, see, for example, Naseer Aruri, "The Middle East on the U.S. Campus," *Link*, 18, 2 (May-June 1985).
11. Former Congressman Findley documents the pervasive influence of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) in *They Dare to Speak Out* (Westport, Conn.: Lawrence Hill, 1985).
12. For a detailed analysis of Israel's relations with Central American regimes, see Milton Jamail and Margo Gutierrez, *It's No Secret: Israel's Military Involvement in Central America*, forthcoming, AAUG. See also Israel Shahak, *Israel's Global Role: Weapons for Repression* (Belmont, Mass.: AAUG, 1982).
13. In May 1994 a pro-Israel group known as Americans for a Safe Israel (AFSI) filed a petition with the Federal Communications Commission to deny renewal of licenses for station WNBC-TV in New York and seven other NBC affiliates,

charging that NBC had presented one-sided coverage of the war in Lebanon. See *Christian Science Monitor*, 14 May 1984. AFSI also commissioned Professor Edward Alexander to write a study, which appeared under the title *NBC's War In Lebanon: The Distorting Mirror* (1983).

14. An example is Ze'ev Chafets, *Double Vision: How the Press Distorts America's Media, of the Middle East* (New York: William Morrow, 1983). Chafets is former head of the Israeli press office in Jerusalem. American journalists have vigorously denied these allegations. (See, e.g., Charles Glass, ABC Beirut correspondent, in *CPJ Update* [published by the Committee to Protect Journalists], November-December 1984).

15. New York: Harper and Row, 1984. For critical reviews of Peter's book, see Norman Finkelstein, in *In These Times*, 5-11 September 1984, 12-13; Muhammad Hallaj, "From Time Immemorial: The Resurrection of a Myth," *Link*, 18, 1 (January-March 1985); and Ian Gilmour and David Gilmour, in *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 7, 2-3 (Spring/Summer 1985), 181-195.

# INTRODUCTION

POPULAR SUPPORT of Israel over the last quarter of a century has been based on a number of myths, the most persistent of which has been the myth of Israel's security, implying the permanent existence of grave threats to the survival of Jewish society in Palestine, this myth has been carefully cultivated to evoke anxious images in public opinion to permit, and even encourage, the use of large amounts of public funds to sustain Israel militarily and economically. "Israel's security" is the official argument with which not only Israel but also the U.S. denies the right of self-determination in their own country to the Palestinian people. For the past three decades it has been accepted as a legitimate explanation for Israel's violation of international resolutions calling for the return of the Palestinian people to their homes. Over the past thirteen years Israel has been allowed to evoke its security to justify its refusal to retreat from the Arab and Palestinian territories occupied in 1967. Security is still the pretext given by successive Israeli governments for widespread massacres of civilian populations in Lebanon, for expropriations of Arab lands, for the establishment of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, for deportations, and for arbitrary detentions of political prisoners. Although the security of the Arab populations in the whole region has been repeatedly threatened over these years by overt and covert warfare, terrorist plots and subversive designs, and although UN resolutions demand the establishment of secure borders for all states in the region, so far only Israel's security has been at the center of international discussion.

The persistence of the myth of Israel's security shows that there is considerable public belief in the so-called Arab commitment to eliminate the Jewish state. Most of the distinguished Western writers who present this case derive their arguments from Zionist versions of events in the late 1940s, at the time of the establishment of Israel, and in the mid-1950s, when Nasser came to power. They go on from these arguments to present Israel's so-called struggle for security and survival as a moral issue. The media often furnish politicians, who have other reasons for their political and military support of Israel, with the convenient issue of the West's moral commitment to Israel.

Other versions or approaches to the facts have more often than not been ignored. For example, recent disclosures by Nahum Goldmann (*Le Monde Diplomatique*, August 1979) have gone practically unnoticed. Goldmann, who for more than thirty years headed the pro-Zionist World Jewish Congress, charges that the Arabs were not consulted about the partition of Palestine in 1947, and further that their willingness to negotiate a political compromise that might have prevented the 1948 war was vetoed and undermined by Ben Gurion before May 1948.

The recently published *Personal Diary of Moshe Sharett* (Yoman Ishi. Tel Aviv: Ma'ariv, 1979, in Hebrew) now offers a decisive and authoritative contribution to the demystification of the myth of Israel's security and its security policies. Between 1933 and 1948 Sharett guided the foreign relations of the Zionist movement, as head of the Jewish Agency's Political Department, and from 1948 to 1956 he was Israel's foreign minister. In 1954 and 1955 he was its prime minister as well. The following pages present extracts from Sharett's diary demonstrating the following points:

1. The Israeli political /military establishment never seriously believed in an Arab threat to the existence of Israel. On the contrary, it sought and applied every means to exacerbate the dilemma of the Arab regimes after the 1948 war. The Arab governments were extremely reluctant to engage in any military confrontation with Israel, yet in order to survive they needed to project to their populations and to the exiled Palestinians in their countries some kind of reaction to Israel's aggressive policies and continuous acts of harassment. In other words, the Arab threat was an Israeli-invented myth which for internal and inter-Arab reasons the Arab regimes could not completely deny, though they constantly feared Israeli preparations for a new war.

2. The Israeli political/military establishment aimed at pushing the Arab states into military confrontations which the Israeli leaders were invariably certain of winning. The goal of these confrontations was to modify the balance of power in the region radically, transforming the Zionist state into the major power in the Middle East.

3. In order to achieve this strategic purpose the following tactics were used:

a) Large and small-scale military operations aimed at civilian populations across the armistice lines, especially in the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza, then respectively under the control of Jordan and Egypt. These operations had a double purpose: to terrorize the populations, and to create a permanent destabilization stemming from tensions between the Arab governments and the populations, who felt they were not adequately protected against Israeli aggression.

b) Military operations against Arab military installations in border areas to undermine the morale of the armies and intensify the regimes' destabilization from inside their military structures.

c) Covert terrorist operations in depth inside the Arab world, used for both espionage and to create fear, tension and instability.

4. Israel's achievement of its strategic purpose was to be realized through the following means:

a) New territorial conquests through war. Although the 1949-50 armistice agreements assigned to Israel a territory one-third larger than had the UN partition plan, the Israeli leadership was still not satisfied with the size of the state, the borders of which it had committed itself to respect on the international level. It sought to recover at least the borders of mandate Palestine. The territorial dimension was considered to be a vital factor in Israel's transformation into a regional power.

b) Political as well as military efforts to bring about the liquidation of all Arab and Palestinian claims to Palestine through the dispersion of the Palestinian refugees of the 1947-49 war to faraway parts of the Arab world as well as outside the Arab world.

c) Subversive operations designed to dismember the Arab world, defeat the Arab national movement, and create puppet regimes which would gravitate to the regional Israeli power.

In providing documentation on the above points, Sharett's Diary deals a deadly blow to a number of important interpretations which are still being presented as historical truths. Among these are the following items:

1. To this date the majority of scholars and analysts cite the nationalization of the Suez Canal as the chief motivation for the October 1956 war, It is thereby implied that the projected British and French aggression against Egypt provided Israel with an opportunity to achieve the termination of fedayeen attacks from across the armistice lines, and to settle its accounts with Nasser's regime, to which these attacks were attributed.

What Sharett tells us now is that a major war against Egypt aimed at the territorial conquest of Gaza and the Sinai was on the Israeli leadership's agenda at least as early as the autumn of 1953, almost a year before Nasser ousted Neguib and consolidated his leadership. It was agreed then that the international conditions for such a war would mature within a period of about three years. The Israeli military attack on Gaza in February 1955 was consciously undertaken as a preliminary act of war. A couple of months later a government decision to commence a war to conquer the Gaza Strip met with the strenuous opposition of the foreign minister, whose political liquidation was thereupon decided by the supporters of the war policy, headed by Ben Gurion. Had the prospect of the tripartite aggression not appeared on the horizon in later months, Israel would have gone on to attack Egypt according to its own plans, and, moreover, with U.S. consent.

2. The occupation by Israel of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967 has been described, and is still widely understood today, as an Israeli defensive action in the face of Arab threats.

Sharett's Diary offers unequivocal evidence that the occupation of Gaza and also of the West Bank was part of Israel's plans since the early fifties. American Zionist leaders were informed about these plans in 1954. In 1955, Jewish and Arab lives were sacrificed in a series of provocative attacks undertaken to create a pretext for the occupation of Jordanian territory. The chief obstacle postponing this occupation was Britain's residual presence in Jordan upholding the Hashemite throne.

3. The continuing, violent Israeli aggression in Lebanon still is being attributed, shamelessly, to Israeli security needs. In particular, Israeli spokesmen, echoed by Western media, try to explain Israel's massive intervention in Lebanon and the Lebanese events in general, with the following historical arguments:

a) In the struggle between Muslims and Christians, a conflict which would have broken out regardless of outside interference, Israel's role has been limited to the defense of the Christian minority.

b) The presence of the Palestinian resistance, or in Israeli terminology, of Palestinian terrorism in that country required Israeli intervention.

Sharett's Diary, however, provides the entire documentation of how in 1954 Ben Gurion developed the diabolic plans to "Christianize" Lebanon, i.e., to invent and create from scratch the inter-Lebanese conflict, and of how a detailed blueprint for the partition and subordination of that country to Israel was elaborated by Israel more than fifteen years before the Palestinian presence became a political factor in Lebanon.

The use of terror and aggression to provoke or create the appearance of an Arab threat to Israel's existence was summed up by the then "number two" of the Zionist state's hierarchy:

"I have been meditating on the long chain of false incidents and hostilities we have invented, and on the many clashes we have provoked which cost us so much blood, and on the violations of the law by our men-all of which brought grave disasters and determined the whole course of events and contributed to the security crisis".

A week earlier, Moshe Dayan, then Israel's chief of staff, explained why Israel needed to reject Any border security arrangements offered by the neighboring Arab States, or by the United Nations, as well as the formal security guarantees suggested by the United States. Such guarantees, he predicted, might "tie Israel's hands." Presumably, that would render unjustifiable or even impossible those attacks and incursions across the armistice lines which through the mid- 1950s went under the euphemistic name of reprisal actions. These actions, Dayan said,

"are our vital lymph. They... help us maintain a high tension among our population and in the army... in order to have young men go to the Negev we have to cry out that it is in danger". (26 May 1955, 102 1)

The creation of a siege mentality in Israeli society was necessary to complement the prefabricated myth of the Arab threat. The two elements were intended to feed each other. Although Israeli society faced a serious risk of social and cultural disintegration under the impact of a mass immigration of Asian and North African Jews into the pre-state's ideologically homogeneous community, the purpose of the siege mentality was not so much that of attaining a defensive cohesiveness in Israel's Jewish society. It was calculated principally to "eliminate the moral brakes" required for a society to fully support a police which constituted a complete reversal of the collective ethical code on which its formal education was based and from which it was supposed to derive its vital strength. Of course, this ethical code had not been respected in the past either. Aggression and terrorism had been exercised by the Zionists before and during the 1947-48 war. The following testimony of a soldier who participated in the occupation of the Palestinian village of Duclma in 1948 is only the most recently disclosed of a long chain of evidence:

Killed between 80 to 100 Arabs, women and children. To kill the children they fractured their heads with sticks. There was not one house without corpses. The men and women of the villages were pushed into houses without food or water. Then the

saboteurs came to dynamite the houses. One commander ordered a soldier to bring two women into a house he was about to blow up... Another soldier prided himself upon having raped an Arab woman before shooting her to death. Another Arab woman with her newborn baby was made to clean the place for a couple of days, and then they shot her and the baby. Educated and well-mannered commanders who were considered "good guys"... became base murderers, and this not in the storm of battle, but as a method of expulsion and extermination. The fewer the Arabs who remain, the better. (quoted in Davar, 9 June 1979)

But these episodes did not filter through to the society at large. The War of Independence was ritualized, on the contrary, as a miraculous victory of (Jewish) right against (Arab) might. Deir Yassin was (falsely) described by the ruling Labor establishment as an isolated and even condemnable case, a product of the brutality of the minority Irgun group. Manuals, school textbooks, history books, anthologies and the media placidly glorified the moral quality of the war, the "Purity of the weapons" used by the army, the Jewish ethos underlying the state.

The security or reprisals policy of the 1950s represented, in this sense, a qualitative leap. The strategic designs were perceived, by the Israeli leaders themselves, as totally irrational in respect to the regional realities, and especially in respect to the international context to which Israel had formally committed itself. Therefore, the support required for it inside the country had to be total, i.e., emotional, almost instinctive, with no concessions to rationality and no moralistic cover. A strategic goal such as the transformation of Israel into a regional power inevitably presupposed the use of large-scale, open violence, and could not pretend even mythically to be achieved on the basis of the earlier moral superiority doctrine which, therefore, had to be replaced with a new one. Terrorism and "revenge" were now to be glorified as the new "moral... and even sacred" values of Israeli society. The resurgent militarism no longer needed the idealistic, socialist varnish of a Palmach: the military symbol was now Unit 101, led by Arik Sharon.

The process of this cultural even more than political transition was not automatic. In fact, as Dayan admitted in the above quotation, much anxiety had to be generated to encourage it. The lives of Jewish victims also had to be sacrificed to create provocations justifying subsequent reprisals, especially in those periods in which the Arab governments succeeded in controlling the reactions of the harassed and enraged Arab border populations. A hammering, daily propaganda, controlled by the censors, was directed to feed the Israeli population with images of the monstrosity of the Enemy. More images showed that negotiated security arrangements with the Enemy could only be interpreted as a fatal proof of Israeli weakness.

The final point of this process which Sharett watched in the 1950s was the election of Menachem Begin as prime minister in 1977. Sharett's Zionist perspective was based on a political/diplomatic alternative to the terror strategy of Ben Gurion and his followers. This, he thought, could consolidate the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine and perhaps enlarge it in the future, without major concessions to the surrounding Arab world. Sharett believed his goals could be achieved without disturbing the West. Indeed, he thought Israeli plans could be coordinated with the West's. He lucidly perceived as fascist the logic behind Israel's security doctrine, and correctly evaluated its consequences of moral corruption on the internal level and increasing violence on the regional level. He opposed it, and was certainly its most illustrious victim. His defeat, however, was inevitable, because his dissent from the strategy was quantitative more than qualitative: on methods rather than substance; on the number, for example, of the victims of a given military action and only vaguely on the ideology behind such actions. Basically, in the light of his unflagging Zionist faith, he was as fascinated as repelled by the strategy, as envious of its immediate successes as he was worried over its longer range consequences and international repercussions for Zionism and Israel.

The liquidation of his dissenting presence was considered indispensable to the realization of the Israeli political/military leadership's megalomaniac and criminal designs. His intrinsic weakness consisted in his seemingly rational hope that the so-called liberal West would prevent the implementation of his opponents' designs. He relied on the West rather than on the awakening of a local, popular conscience which he had the power and the information to provoke but which as a Zionist he could not and dared not do.

On the contrary, notwithstanding his scruples and torments he almost invariably ended up collaborating with his adversaries, and with those elements in the security establishment who conspired against him, in the fabrication and diffusion of deliberately distorted versions of events and policies for domestic and international consumption.

In a historical perspective Sharett's self-portrait as it emerges from his Personal Diary, thus also **explains why no so-called moderate Zionist proposal is possible**, and how any attempt to liberalize Zionism from the inside could not but – as has repeatedly been the case – end in defeat. A clear, lucid, coherent logic runs through the history of the past three decades. In the early fifties the bases were laid for constructing a state imbued with the principles of sacred terrorism against the surrounding Arab societies on the threshold of the eighties the same state is for the first time denounced by its own intellectuals as being tightly in the deadly grip of fascism.

This may be just one more reason why Western journalists, scholars and analysts may find themselves greatly embarrassed by the following document. These commentators still insist on upholding the presumed moral commitment of the West to what they obstinately continue to mystify is Israel's security. In this sense Sharett's Diary, is potentially devastating to Zionist propaganda as the Pentagon Papers were in regard to U.S. aggression in Vietnam.



## Chapter 1

**Moshe Sharett and His Personal Diary**

Moshe Sharett (Shertok) was born in Kherson, Russia, in 1894. He emigrated with his family – his father was a fervent Zionist activist – to Palestine in 1906, at the age of twelve. The family settled in the Arab village of Ein Sinya, near Nablus. Later, Moshe, his brother and three sisters would describe that two-year period, during which they studied Arabic, played with the children of the village and learned fascinating stories from the village's elders as the happiest time of their lives. In 1908 the Shertok family moved to Tel Aviv, where Moshe entered the Hertselyah High School. At the outbreak of World War 1, he was conscripted into the Ottoman army, where he took an officer's course and then served as an officer, mostly in Syria. After the war, while the British Mandate was established in Palestine, he graduated from the London School of Economics, and shortly thereafter entered political activity in the ranks of Labor Zionism. He was a founding member of Mapai (Party of the Workers of Eretz Israel), and became chief editor of Davar, the daily organ of the Histadrut (the trade union federation dominated by Mapai). Later he was appointed as deputy to Haim Arlosorov, the head of the Jewish Agency's Political Department. After Arlosorov was murdered on a Tel Aviv beach in 1933, Sharett was appointed as his successor. The Chairman of the Jewish Agency at that time was David Ben Gurion.

According to Sharett, the conflict with Ben Gurion which characterized their twenty-five years of close collaboration at the summit of the Zionist movement and the state of Israel, originated in suspicions on Ben Gurion's part that Sharett was loyal to Chaim Weizmann, the president of the World Zionist Organization. In the 1940s Ben Gurion accused Sharett, unjustly according to the latter, of collaborating with Weizmann to negotiate, with U.S. mediation, an agreement between the Zionist movement and the Emir Faisal of Saudi Arabia. Sharett claimed that in reality he contributed to the failure of those negotiations. But according to Dr. Nahum Goldmann, Sharett was again involved in 1947-48 with Goldmann in negotiations mediated by U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall, aimed at obtaining a political solution to the problem of the Zionist presence in Palestine, possibly leading to creating a Middle Eastern Confederation including a Zionist entity. The main negotiator on the Arab side was to be Egyptian Foreign Minister Nukrashi Pasha. These negotiations, which were expected to prevent the first Arab-Israeli war, would have meant postponing the date scheduled for the proclamation of the state of Israel by a few weeks. Ben Gurion vetoed the negotiations, rejected the postponement, and accused Sharett of being opposed to the creation of the state, an accusation he vehemently denied. Fundamentally, Ben Gurion's preference for the use of force, versus Sharett's preference for the diplomatic method to achieve the same goals, was the basis for the conflict between these two Zionist leaders, which lasted until Sharett was ousted from the Israeli government in June 1956. Moshe Sharett died in Tel Aviv in 1965.

The *Personal Diary*, which Moshe Sharett wrote from October 1953 to November 1956 covers the last years of his political activity as Israel's first foreign minister, including the two years in which he replaced Ben Gurion as the prime minister. It then extends over the first fifteen months of the tormented inactivity following his political demise. Moshe Sharett stopped writing his diary in the middle of a phrase on November 29, 1957. His last notes identify one of his previous collaborators, considered a close personal and political friend, as one of the conspirators against him.

The *Diary*, a 2,400 page document in eight volumes, contains the daily notes and *aide-mémoires* in which Sharett recorded current events: personal, family, and party happenings, as well as national and international meetings of prime importance, conversations with his wife or other members of the family alongside administrative questions regarding his ministry and comments on cabinet meetings. The intimate nature of the *Diary*, together with the exceptionally authoritative position of its author, constitutes a rare guarantee of credibility. Unlike other memoirs which have come out of Israel in recent years, and which were written for publication, Sharett's *Diary* hardly can be suspected of distortion, self glorification or subjectively polemic intentions. It is not surprising at all, therefore, that Sharett's son and his family were subjected to immense pressures to refrain from publication, or at least to submit the document to Labor Party censorship. Sharett's son Ya'acov finally decided to publish the complete writings.



## Chapter 2

### **Ben Gurion Goes to Sdeh Boker: Spiritual Retreat as a Tactic**

Moshe Sharrett jotted the first of the daily notes in his personal diary on October 9, 1953. Shortly before that, Ben Gurion, who was Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, announced his intention to withdraw from government activities. Sharett, who had been second in command to Ben Gurion since the pre-state days, was slated to replace him as Israel's prime minister. He would also retain the Foreign Ministry.

To public opinion at large, Ben Gurion's intention to retire was presented grandly as a spiritual exercise, a measure capable of galvanizing Israeli and Jewish youth and necessary for leading the Zionist sheep back to the abandoned ideals of pioneering and settlement. In reality, while the state was spending millions of pounds on the construction of a "hut" for Ben Gurion in the kibbutz Sdeh Boker in Negev, and on related security and communications arrangements, the Old Man already knew, and informed his collaborators, that his absence from the government would last for two years. Behind the campaign idealizing his withdrawal was a scenario meticulously prepared by him and his men. Even then, just four years after the 1948-49 war, the security establishment was ready with plans for Israel's territorial expansion. The armistice lines established in Rhodes, although traced so as to grant Israel over a third more than the territory allotted it by the UN partition resolution in 1947, were considered unsatisfactory by the army, which aspired to recover at least the boundaries of mandate Palestine. Ben Gurion had theorized already about the necessity for Israel to become the regional power in the Middle East. Toward the realization of this goal a strategy for the destabilization of the region also had been drawn: operatively, as we shall see, its pivot for the next quarter of a century was to be the political-military policy known under the false name of "retaliation." The international conditions for the implementation of this strategic design, though, had yet to be prepared.

Economic and military aid from the West, in particular, was an essential condition. At the same time, rapprochement between the West and the Arab world had to be prevented. Toward this aim, the West had to be persuaded that Israel would be its best bet in the region militarily, and this was another of the major objectives of the massive reprisal attacks launched across the borders by the Israeli army. At the same time, though, the West should not be *prematurely* alarmed about Israel's intentions, because it was not ready yet to support these Israeli aims. Ben Gurion's formal withdrawal, and his (formal) replacement by the "moderate" Sharett, was interpreted by international diplomacy as a sign that Israel was not headed for war. Since the launching of the reprisal actions, such a fear was prevalent in the Arab world.

In the short range, the Israeli design was aimed at slowing down the negotiations between Arab states which were pressing to be armed, and the West, which was reluctant to arm them. In the meantime, the idea that the military actions were intended for no purpose other than their declared one – protecting Israel's civilian populations against guerrilla-type attacks from Arab territories – would gain in credibility under the premiership of Sharett, a man notoriously devoted to moderation and diplomacy. The myth of Israel's security, aimed at generating a consensus, would have its strength enhanced to a greater extent in Ben Gurion's absence. Thus, he went off to Sdeh Boker, accompanied by the aura of a pioneer-saint, and Sharett prepared to take over, or so he thought. In fact, Ben Gurion was to keep control of the real channels of command.

### Chapter 3

## Retaliation for War

On October 11th, 1953, the foreign minister and would-be premier noted in his diary that he had been to see Ben Zvi, the president of the state:

Ben Zvi raised as usual some inspired questions ... such as do we have a chance to occupy the Sinai and how wonderful it would be if the Egyptians started an offensive which we could defeat and follow with an invasion of that desert. He was very disappointed when I told him that the Egyptians show no tendency to facilitate us in this occupation task through a provocative challenge on their side. (11 October 1953, 27)

The next day Ben Gurion informed Sharett that Pinhas Lavon, a staunch supporter of the retaliation policy, would succeed him as the minister of defense, and that he was about to nominate Moshe Dayan as the armed forces chief of staff.

I said immediately that Moshe Dayan is a soldier only at war time but during peace time he is a politician. The nomination means "politicization" of the headquarters. The new Chief of Staff's immense capacity for plotting and intrigue-making will yield many complications. Ben Gurion admitted to the truth of these definitions and even added that Dayan himself defined himself this way and sought to disqualify himself for the job, but never mind, it will be all right. I left with a sinking heart. (ibid., 29)

Sharett considered the international climate at that time to be unfavorable to Israel: the U.S. has just decided to supply arms to Syria and Iraq, and to arm Egypt soon after the signature of the Canal Zone Agreement. In addition, Israel's constant violations of the UN demands that it cease diversion of the Jordan River and adhere to the Johnston Plan were causing increasing consternation in Western capitals. The West had cultivated the hope that an Arab-Israeli agreement on the diversion of the Jordan waters would, if reached and implemented, become the cornerstone for a wider agreement that would take the wind out of growing anti-Western nationalist tensions in the area. [2] According to the UN observers' chief, Danish General Wagen Benike, "the Israelis have worked and are still working on Arab lands. We [the Israelis] are changing the terrain strategically.." (15 October 1955, 39) This, Sharett comments, is really a shameful deed:

I inquired several times, and each time I was solemnly assured that no Arab land has been touched. After Benike told me ... that it was proved to him that our work was begun on Arab land ... I again interrogated Amir [head of the Water Works Dept.] who now admits the facts.... Thus I have been made to appear as a liar in front of the whole world! (31 October 1955, 32)

Fearing that an overdose of Israeli violence at this moment might precipitate a crisis with the West, Sharett tried to block the Kibya reprisal operation which had been endorsed by Ben Gurion on the eve of his departure for a vacation preceding his formal retreat. He pointed out that the minor border incident, which was to have served as a pretext for the planned attack on the West Bank village, had just been publicly condemned by Jordan, and that the Jordanian representatives in the mixed armistice commission had promised to see to it that similar incidents would not be repeated.

I told Lavon that this [attack] will be a grave error, and recalled, citing various precedents, that it was never proved that reprisal actions serve their declared

purpose. Lavon smiled ... and kept to his own idea... Ben Gurion, he said, didn't share my view. (14 October 1953, 37)

According to the first news from the other side, thirty houses have been demolished in one village. This reprisal is unprecedented in its dimensions and in the offensive power used. I walked up and down in my room, helpless and utterly depressed by my feeling of impotence... I was simply horrified by the description in Radio Ramallah's broadcast of the destruction of the Arab village. Tens of houses have been razed to the soil and tens of people killed. I can imagine the storm that will break out tomorrow in the Arab and Western capitals. (15 October 1953, 39)

I must underline that when I opposed the action I didn't even remotely suspect such a bloodbath. I thought that I was opposing one of those actions which have become a routine in the past. Had I even remotely suspected that such a massacre was to be held, I would have raised real hell. (16 October 1953, 44)

Now the army wants to know how we [the foreign ministry] are going to explain the issue. In a joint meeting of army and foreign ministry officials Shmuel Bendor suggested that we say that the army had no part in the operation, but that the inhabitants of the border villages, infuriated by previous incidents and seeking revenge, operated on their own. Such a version will make us appear ridiculous: any child would say that this was a military operation. (16 October 1953)

Yehoshafat Harkabi [then Assistant Chief of Military Intelligence] reported movements of Jordanian troops from Transjordan to the West Bank in two directions ... from Irbid to the Nablus region and from Amman to Jerusalem. I thought that these movements did not indicate preparations for attack but [were] only preparations for aggression on our side. It is impossible that they did not get the impression that the bombing of Kibya means, if not a calculated plan to cause war, then at least willingness to have one starting as a consequence of the action. "Fati" said that according to Radio Ramallah 56 bodies have already been extracted from the ruins. (17 October 1955, 44 45)

At 3 P.m. Russel [U.S. Chargé d'Affaires] and Milton Fried [U.S. Attaché] came in ... Russel's face was gloomy. Kibya was "in the air"... I said I will not say a word to justify the attack on Kibya but I must warn against detaching this action from a chain of events and I blamed the uncontrolled situation on the helplessness or the lack on goodwill on the part of Jordan. From that point onwards I attacked U.S. policy as one of the factors which contributed to the encouragement of the Arabs and the isolation of Israel... I have condemned the folly of the [U.S.] idea that we want war and all our actions in the South and in the North are directed exclusively to bring it about... Russel asked ... if we shall disavow Kibya. I said that I cannot answer... Katriel ("Salmon") [Israel's military attaché in London] came up with the idea of a "diversion": the Kibya affair would attract all the attention unless we are able to invent some other dramatic issue. (17 October 1953, 45)

[In the cabinet meeting] I condemned the Kibya affair that exposed us in front of the whole world as a gang of blood-suckers, capable of mass massacres regardless, it seems, of whether their actions may lead to war. I warned that this stain will stick to us and will not be washed away for many years to come... It was decided that a communique on Kibya will be published and Ben Gurion [back from his vacation for the occasion] was to write it. I insisted on including an expression of regret. Ben Gurion insisted on excluding any responsibility of the army (See Appendix 1): the civilian citizens of the border areas, enraged by the constant murders, have taken justice into their hands. After all [he said] the border settlements are full of arms and the settlers are ex-soldiers.... I said that no one in the world will believe such a story and we shall only expose ourselves as liars. But I couldn't seriously demand that the communique explicitly affirm the army's responsibility because this would have made it impossible to condemn the act and we will have ended up approving this monstrous bloodbath. [3] (18 October 1953, 51)

For Sharett as well, the army was irreproachable. But then why blame the army when the decision had been taken on a political level? Beyond this, however, emerges a significant detail. Clearly, **the security of the Israeli border population could hardly be more jeopardized than by attributing to them the responsibility for a bloodbath such as Kibya's.** Encouraging an escalation of acts of revenge and further reprisals clearly had a cynical provocative intent, as did Lavon's smile when Sharett tried to convince him of the fatuousness of the relations in relation to their **declared purpose.** From the beginning, in fact, the retaliation policy was headed elsewhere: the stronger the tensions in the region, the more demoralized the Arab populations and destabilized the Arab regimes, the stronger the pressures for the transfer of the concentrations of Palestinian refugees from places near the border away into the interior of the Arab world – and the better it was for the preparation of the next war. In the meantime, the army could be kept in training. On October 19 a cabinet meeting was convened where:

Ben Gurion spoke for two and a half hours on the army's preparations for the second round ... [He] presented detailed figures on the growth of the military force of the Arab countries which (he said) will reach its peak in 1956. (19 October 1953, 54)

It was not a prophecy. This meant that Israel would wage war within that date. Sharett added:

As I listened ... I was thinking ... that we should proceed against the danger with non-military means: propose daring and concrete solutions for the Refugee problem through the payment of compensations, improve our relations with the powers, search ceaselessly for an understanding with Egypt.

This was certainly **not** what the Israeli security establishment was driving at. On October 26, 1953, a group of American Zionist leaders was lectured to, in Israel, by Colonel Matti Peled. The conclusions from that presentation, Sharett noted, were "implicitly clear":

One, that the army considers the present border with Jordan as absolutely unacceptable. Two, that the army is planning war in order to occupy the rest of Western Eretz Israel. [4] (26 October 1953, 81)

Although formulated in very mild terms, the Security Council condemnation of Israel for the Kibya attack pushed Sharett to impose an embargo on reprisal actions unless he personally authorized them. For a while, no spectacular actions were undertaken, but minor, unauthorized Israeli incursions into the West Bank and Gaza continued to make civilian victims. The murder of a Jordanian doctor on the Bethlehem-Hebron road, which was reported by the press, raised the premier's suspicions, for example. Enraged, he learned that this, in fact, was Israeli work. This, and other similar investigations, were to fray the relations between the military and the prime minister. In January 1954, Dayan requested and obtained a meeting with all Mapai's ministers:

Moshe Dayan brought out one plan after the other for "direct action." The first what should be done to force open the blockade in the straits of Eilat. A ship flying the Israeli flag should be sent, and if the Egyptians will bomb it we should bomb the Egyptian base from the air, or [we should] conquer Ras-e-Naqeb or open our way from the south to the Gaza Strip up to the coast. There was a general uproar. I asked him, Do you realize this would mean war with Egypt? He said, of course... (31 January 1954, 331)

War with Egypt was to remain a major ambition of Israel's security establishment, but the time was not yet ripe. On February 25, Ben Gurion, himself put the brakes on his collaborators' impatience when he rejected Lavon's proposal "to go ahead immediately with the plan for the separation of the Gaza Strip from Egypt." The Old Man was determined to stick to his timetable. Now, Sharett noted later, "Ben Gurion suggested to concentrate on action against Syria." (27 February 1954, 377)

## Chapter 4

### **A Historical Opportunity to Occupy Southern Syria**

At the above cited meeting on January 31, 1954 Moshe Dayan went on to outline his war plans. Sharett's note for that day continues:

The second plan-action against the interference of the Syrians with our fishing in the Lake of Tiberias... The third – if, due to internal problems in Syria, Iraq invades that country we should advance [militarily, into Syria] and realize a series of "faits accomplis"... The interesting conclusion to be drawn from all this regards the direction in which the new Chief of Staff is thinking. I am extremely worried. (31 January 1954, 332)

On February 25, 1954, Syrian troops stationed in Aleppo revolted against Adib Shishakly's regime.

After lunch Lavon took me aside and started trying to persuade me: This is the right moment to act – this is the time to move forward and occupy the Syrian border positions beyond the Demilitarized Zone. Syria is disintegrating. A State with whom we signed an armistice agreement exists no more. Its government is about to fall and there is no other power in view. Moreover, Iraq has practically moved into Syria. This is an historical opportunity, we shouldn't miss it.

I was reluctant to approve such a blitz-plan and saw ourselves on the verge of an abyss of disastrous adventure. I asked if he suggests to act immediately and I was shocked when I realized that he does. I said that if indeed Iraq will move into Syria with its army it will be a revolutionary turn which will ... justify far reaching conclusions, but for the time being this is only a danger, not a fact. It is not even clear if Shishakly will fall: he may survive. We ought to wait before making any decision. He repeated that time was precious and we must act so as not to miss an opportunity which otherwise might be lost forever. Again I answered that under the circumstances right now I cannot approve any such action. Finally I said that next Saturday we would be meeting with Ben Gurion ... and we could consult him then on the matter. I saw that he was extremely displeased by the delay. However, he had no choice but to agree. (25 February 1954, 374)

The next day the Shishakly regime actually fell. The following day, February 27, Sharett was present at a meeting where Lavon and Dayan reported to Ben Gurion that what happened in Syria was "a typical Iraqi action." The two proposed again that the Israeli army be put on the march. Ben Gurion, "electrified," agreed. Sharett reiterated his opposition, pointing to the certainty of a Security Council condemnation, the possibility of the use against Israel of the Tripartite Declaration of 1950, hence the probability of a "shameful failure" The three objected that "our entrance [into Syria] is justified in view of the situation in Syria. This is an act of defense of our border area." Sharett closed the discussion by insisting on the need for further discussion in the cabinet meeting, scheduled for the next morning:

Lavon's face wore a depressed expression. He understood this to be the end of the matter. (27 February 1954, 377)

On Sunday, February 28, the press reported that no Iraqi troops had entered Syria. The situation in Damascus was under the complete control of President Hashem Al Atassi. The cabinet approved Sharett's position and rejected Lavon's vehement appeal not to miss a

historical opportunity. Lavon said "The U.S. is about to betray us and ally itself with the Arab world." We should "demonstrate our strength and indicate to the U.S. that our life depends on this so that they will not dare do anything against us." The premier's victory, however, was to be short-lived.

Until that time the Syrian-Israeli border presented no particular problems to the Israelis. When tensions developed, it was almost invariably due to Israeli provocations, such as the irrigation work on lands belonging to Arab farmers, which was condemned by the UN; or the use of military patrol boats against Syrian fishermen fishing in the Lake of Tiberias. No Syrian regime could afford to refrain from offering some minimum protection to its border citizens against Israeli attacks or the taking away of their livelihoods, but neither did the rulers of Damascus feel stable enough to wish to be dragged into a major conflict with their southern neighbor. Clashes were therefore minor, and essentially seasonal. No security arguments could be credibly invoked to justify an expansionist program, or any other aggression against Syria.

On December 12, 1954, however, a Syrian civilian plane was hijacked by Israeli war planes shortly after its takeoff, and forced to land at Lydda airport. Passengers and crew were detained and interrogated for two days, until stormy international protests forced the Israelis to release them. Furious, Sharett wrote to Lavon on December 22:

It must be clear to you that we had no justification whatsoever to seize the plane, and that once forced down we should have immediately released it and not held the passengers under interrogation for 48 hours. I have no reason to doubt the truth of the factual affirmation of the U.S. State Department that our action was without precedent in the history of international practice.

... What shocks and worries me is the narrow-mindedness and the shortsightedness of our military leaders. They seem to presume that the State of Israel may – or even must – behave in the realm of international relations according to the laws of the jungle. (22 December 1954, 607)

Sharett also protested to Lavon against the scandalous press campaign, which he suspected was inspired by the security establishment and which was aimed at convincing public opinion

that the Syrian plane was stopped and forced down because it violated Israeli sovereignty and perhaps endangered its security. "As a result, the public does not understand why such a plane was released and naturally it concludes that we have here an unjustified concession on the part of the government" (ibid.)

On December 11, the day before Israel set this world precedent for air piracy, five Israeli soldiers were captured inside Syrian territory while mounting wiretapping installations on the Syrian telephone network. A month later, on January 13, 1955, one of them committed suicide in prison. The official Israeli version is, once again, that the five had been abducted in Israeli territory, taken to Syria, and tortured. The result was a violent emotional upsurge in Israel, all the more so as this news arrived shortly after the condemnation in Cairo of members of an Israeli terrorist ring which had been described to public opinion as an anti-Jewish frame-up. The prime minister confided to his personal diary:

A young boy has been sacrificed for nothing... Now they will say that his blood is on my hands. If I hadn't ordered the release of the Syrian plane [we would have had our hostages and] the Syrians could have been forced to free the five. The boy ... would have been alive ... our soldiers have not been kidnapped in Israeli territory by Syrian invaders as the army spokesman announced ... They penetrated into Syria and not accidentally but in order to take care of a wiretapping installation, connected to a Syrian telephone line ... the young men were sent without any experienced person, they were not instructed what to do in case of failure and the result was that in the first interrogation they broke down and told the whole truth... I have no doubt that the press and the Knesset will cry about torture. On the other hand, it is possible that the boy committed suicide because he broke down during the interrogation and only later he understood what a disaster he has brought upon his comrades and what he did to the state. Possibly his comrades tormented him afterwards. Anyway, his conscience probably caused him to take this terrible step. (3 January 1955, 649)



Isser [Harel, then Shin Bet chief] warned me of what may happen to me personally as a result of the suicide. A poisonous attack is being organized against me... it is particularly necessary to take care of what is happening in the army and to prevent lawless riots. (14 January 1955, 653).

It is clear that Dayan's intention ... is to get [Syrian] hostages in order to obtain the release of our prisoners in Damascus. He put it into his head that it is necessary to take hostages, and would not let go. (10 February 1955, 714)

Nineteen years later, Dayan, then minister of defense in Golda Meir's government, ordered his troops to move into a school, regardless of the danger to Israeli civilians including children, in Ma'alot, with the sole aim of preventing Palestinian guerrillas from obtaining, through the taking of hostages, the release of their Palestinian comrades jailed and tortured under the military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. On that, as on other similar occasions, a virulent and poisonous Zionist campaign, widely echoed in the Western media, declared the Palestinian liberation movement's attempt to free prisoners by taking hostages as intolerable, barbaric, savage, murderous, and terrorist. When did these same media call Moshe Dayan a **terrorist**?

Israeli plots against Syria in the fifties were not only limited to expansionist and terrorist projects. On July 31, 1955, a senior foreign ministry aide, Gideon Raphael, reported to Sharett on a couple of "interesting meetings" he had held with Arab exiles in Europe. One of these was with ex-Syrian Premier Hosni Barazi:

Hosni wants to get back in power, and is ready to accept help from anyone: from Turkey, in exchange for Syria's future entrance into the Ankara-Baghdad pact; from the U. S., in exchange for Syria's future alliance with the West, with Israel, in exchange for a peace agreement. (31 July 1955, 1099)

Peace, however, was the last thing Israel was interested in. Israel's support would require another price:

Meanwhile he says to us give-give: money for newspapers, money to buy off personalities, money to buy off political parties. Gideon [suggested to him that] ... he himself is a big land owner, and why won't he get together a group of land owners, initiate a big plan of settling refugees... Hosni listened, said it was a wonderful idea ... but only after he regains power, and until he regains power he needs a payment in advance. (31 July 1955, 1100)

A year later, a week before his final fall from the government, Sharett got a last report on Israel's subversive activities in Syria from his advisor on Arab affairs, "Josh" Palmon:

Our contacts with [Adib] Shishakly [the exiled Syrian dictator overthrown in 1954] have been strengthened. The guidelines for common action after his return to power (if he returns!) have been established. We have decided on guidelines to contact the U.S. in regard to this issue. (12 June 1956, 1430)

None of these "historical opportunities" regarding Syria actually materialized at that time, nor, however, did Israel ever abandon its plans to install a puppet regime in Damascus. But in Lebanon as well, the precise operational blueprints elaborated in **1954** waited two decades before being put into action. [5]

## Chapter 5

### Let Us Create A Maronite State in Lebanon

The February 27, 1954 meeting among Ben Gurion, Sharett, Lavon and Dayan has already been mentioned in connection with Israel's invasion plans of Egypt and Syria. In that same meeting a concrete proposal was outlined to disrupt Israel's most peaceful neighbor at that time, Lebanon. In this case, Israel's hegemonic ambitions did not even pretend to wear the phony fig leaf of security or defense.

Then he [Ben Gurion] passed on to another issue. This is the time, he said, to push Lebanon, that is, the Maronites in that country, to proclaim a Christian State. I said that this was nonsense. The Maronites are divided. The partisans of Christian separatism are weak and will dare do nothing. A Christian Lebanon would mean their giving up Tyre, Tripoli, the Beka'a. There is no force that could bring Lebanon back to its pre-World War I dimensions, and all the more so because in that case it would lose its economic *raison-d'être*. Ben Gurion reacted furiously. He began to enumerate the historical justification for a restricted Christian Lebanon. If such a development were to take place, the Christian Powers would not dare oppose it. I claimed that there was no factor ready to create such a situation, and that if we were to push and encourage it on our own we would get ourselves into an adventure that will place shame on us. Here came a wave of insults regarding my lack of daring and my narrow-mindedness. We ought to send envoys and spend money. I said there was no money. The answer was that there is no such thing. The money must be found, if not in the Treasury then at the Jewish Agency! For such a project it is worthwhile throwing away one hundred thousand, half a million, a million dollars. When this happens a decisive change will take place in the Middle East, a new era will start. I got tired of struggling against a whirlwind. (27 February 1954, 377)

The next day Ben Gurion sent Sharett the following letter:

To Moshe Sharett  
The Prime Minister

Sdeh Boker February 27, 1954

Upon my withdrawal from the government I decided in my heart to desist from intervening and expressing my opinion on current political affairs so as not to make things difficult for the government in any way. And if you hadn't called on me, the three of you, yourself, Lavon and Dayan, I would not have, of my own accord, expressed an opinion on what is being done or what ought to be done. But as you called me, I deem it my duty to comply with your wishes, and especially with your own wish as Prime Minister. Therefore, I permit myself to go back to one issue which you did not approve of and discuss it again, and this is the issue of Lebanon.

... It is clear that Lebanon is the weakest link in the Arab League. The other minorities in the Arab States are all Muslim, except for the Copts. But Egypt is the most compact and solid of the Arab States and the majority there consists of one solid block, of one race, religion and language, and the Christian minority does not seriously affect their political and national unity. Not so the Christians in Lebanon. They are a majority in the historical Lebanon and this majority has a tradition and a culture different from those of the other components of the League. Also within the wider borders (this was the worst mistake made by France when it extended the borders of Lebanon), the Muslims are not free to do as they wish, even if they are a

majority there (and I don't know if they are, indeed, a majority) for fear of the Christians, The creation of a Christian State is therefore a natural act; it has historical roots and it will find support in wide circles in the Christian world, both Catholic and Protestant. In normal times this would be almost impossible. First and foremost because of the lack of initiative and courage of the Christians. But at times of confusion, or revolution or civil war, things take on another aspect, and even the weak declares himself to be a hero. Perhaps (there is never any certainty in politics) now is the time to bring about the creation of a Christian State in our neighborhood. Without our initiative and our vigorous aid this will not be done. It seems to me that this is the **central duty**, or at least one of the central duties, of our foreign policy. This means that time, energy and means ought to be invested in it and that we must act in all possible ways to bring about a radical change in Lebanon. Sasson ... and our other Arabists must be mobilized. If money is necessary, no amount of dollars should be spared, although the money may be spent in vain. We must concentrate all our efforts on this issue ... This is a historical opportunity. Missing it will be unpardonable. There is no challenge against the World Powers in this ... Everything should be done, in my opinion, rapidly and at full steam.

The goal will not be reached of course, without a restriction of Lebanon's borders. But if we can find men in Lebanon and exiles from it who will be ready to mobilize for the creation of a Maronite state, extended borders and a large Muslim population will be of no use to them and this will not constitute a disturbing factor.

I don't know if we have people in Lebanon – but there are various ways in which the proposed experiment can be carried out.

D.B.G. (27 February 1954, 2397-2398)

Sharett responded a few weeks later:

Mr. David Ben Gurion

March 18, 1954

Sdeh Boker.

.... A permanent assumption of mine is that if sometimes there is some reason to interfere from the outside in the internal affairs of some country in order to support a political movement inside it aiming toward some target it is only when that movement shows some independent activity which there is a chance to enhance and maybe to bring to success by encouragement and help from the outside. There is no point in trying to create from the outside a movement that does not exist at all inside ... it is impossible to inject life into a dead body.

As far as I know, in Lebanon today exists no movement aiming at transforming the country into a Christian State governed by the Maronite community...

This is not surprising. The transformation of Lebanon into a Christian State as a result of an outside initiative is unfeasible today ... I don't exclude the possibility of accomplishing this goal in the wake of a wave of shocks that will sweep the Middle East... will destroy the present constellations and will form others. But in the present Lebanon, with its present territorial and demographic dimensions and its international relations, no serious initiative of the kind is imaginable.

The Christians do not constitute the majority in Lebanon. Nor are they a unified block, politically speaking or community-wise. The Orthodox minority in Lebanon tends to identify with their brethren in Syria. They will not be ready to go to war for a Christian Lebanon, that is for a Lebanon smaller than it is today, and detached from the Arab League. On the contrary, they would probably not be opposed to a Lebanon united to Syria, as this would contribute to strengthening their own community and the Orthodox community throughout the region .... In fact, there are more Orthodox Christians in Syria than in Lebanon, and the Orthodox in Syria and Lebanon together are more numerous than the Maronites.

As to the Maronites, the great majority among them has for years now supported those pragmatic political leaders of their community who have long since abandoned the dream of a Christian Lebanon, and put all their cards on a Christian-Muslim coalition in that country. These leaders have developed the consciousness that there is no chance for an isolated Maronite Lebanon and that the historical perspective of their community means a partnership with the Muslims in power, and

in a membership of Lebanon in the League, hoping and believing that these factors can guarantee that the Lebanese Muslims will abandon their longings for a unification of Lebanon with Syria and will enhance the development among them of a feeling for Lebanese independence.

Therefore, the great majority of the Maronite community is liable to see in any attempt at raising the flag of territorial shrinking and Maronite power a dangerous attempt at subverting the status of their community, its security and even its very existence. Such an initiative would seem disastrous to them because it could tear apart the pattern of Christian-Muslim collaboration in the present Lebanon which was created through great efforts and sacrifices for an entire generation; because it would mean throwing the Lebanese Muslims into the Syrian embrace, and finally, because it would fatally bring about the historical disaster of an annexation of Lebanon to Syria and the annihilation of the former's personality through its dilution in a big Muslim state.

You may object that these arguments are irrelevant as the Plan is based on tearing away from Lebanon the Muslim provinces of Tyre, the Beka'a and Tripoli. But who can predict that these provinces will actually give up their ties to Lebanon and their political and economic connection to Beirut ? Who can assure that the Arab League will be ready to give up the status that Lebanon's affiliation confers to it ...? Who will vouch that the bloody war that will inevitably explode as a result of such an attempt will be limited to Lebanon and not drag Syria into the battlefield immediately ? Who can be sure that the Western Powers will look on as observers and will not intervene in the experiment before a Christian Lebanon will have been realized ? Who can guarantee that the Maronite leadership itself will not become aware of all the above considerations and will therefore back out of such a dangerous adventure ?

... There are also decisive economic arguments against it. We are not discussing the issue in 1920/21... but 30 years later. Mount Lebanon has meanwhile integrated into one organic unit with the coastal plane of Tyre and Sidon, the Valley of Baalbeck and the city of Tripoli. They are commercially and economically interdependent and inseparable. Mount Lebanon was not a self-sufficient unit even before World War I... The annexation of the three regions plus the city of Beirut to the Lebanese State has rendered possible the creation of a balanced economy. A return to the past would not just mean a surgical operation but also a disintegration leading to the end of Lebanon...

I cannot imagine, even from this viewpoint alone, that any serious organization would collaborate with a plan that in my opinion would entail Lebanon's economic suicide.

When all this has been said, [I should add that] I would not have objected, and on the contrary I would have certainly been favorable to the idea, of actively aiding any manifestation of agitation in the Maronite community tending to strengthen its isolationist tendencies, even if there were no real chances of achieving the goals; I would have considered positive the very existence of such an agitation and the destabilization it could bring about, the trouble it would have caused the League, the diversion of attention from the Arab-Israeli complications that it would have caused, and the very kindling of a fire made up of impulses toward Christian independence. But what can I do when such an agitation is nonexistent ? ... In the present condition, I am afraid that any attempt on our part would be considered as lightheartedness and superficiality or worse – as an adventurous speculation upon the well being and existence of others and a readiness to sacrifice their basic good for the benefit of a temporary tactical advantage for Israel.

Moreover, if this plan is not kept a secret but becomes known – a danger which cannot be underestimated in the Middle Eastern circumstances – the damage which we shall suffer... would not be compensated even by an eventual success of the operation itself...

M. S. (18 March 1954, 2398- 2400)

On April 24 a fleeting note in the *Diary*, informs us that "contacts with certain circles in Lebanon" had been discussed that day between the premier and some of his collaborators in the foreign ministry. The next time Lebanon is mentioned is on February 12, 1955: Neguib Sfeir, "an adventurer and a visionary" whom Sharett had known since 1920, had just paid a visit to the Israeli ambassador in Rome, Eliahu Sasson,

apparently on behalf of Lebanon's President Camille Chamoun. Lebanon would be ready to sign a separate peace if we accept the following three conditions: (a) guarantee Lebanon's borders; (b) come to Lebanon's aid if it is attacked by Syria; (c) buy Lebanon's agricultural surplus. Sasson ... suggested a meeting between himself and Chamoun during the latter's next visit to Rome. (12 February 1955, 723)

On May 16, during a joint meeting of senior officials of the defense and foreign affairs ministries, Ben Gurion again raised the demand that Israel do something about Lebanon. The moment was particularly propitious, he maintained, due to renewed tensions between Syria and Iraq, and internal trouble in Syria. Dayan immediately expressed his enthusiastic support:

According to him [Dayan] the only thing that's necessary is to find an officer, even just a Major. We should either win his heart or buy him with money, to make him agree to declare himself the savior of the Maronite population. Then the Israeli army will enter Lebanon, will occupy the necessary territory, and will create a Christian regime which will ally itself with Israel. The territory from the Litani southward will be totally annexed to Israel and everything will be all right. If we were to accept the advice of the Chief of Staff we would do it tomorrow, without awaiting a signal from Baghdad.

... I did not want to bicker with Ben Gurion... in front of his officers and limited myself to saying that this might mean ... war between Israel and Syria... At the same time I agreed to set up a joint commission composed of officials of the Foreign Affairs Ministry and the army to deal with Lebanese affairs... [According to Ben Gurion] this commission should relate to the Prime Minister. (16 May 1954, 966)

The Chief of Staff supports a plan to hire a [Lebanese] officer who will agree to serve as a puppet so that the Israeli army may appear as responding to his appeal "to liberate Lebanon from its Muslim oppressors." This will of course be a crazy adventure... We must try to prevent dangerous complications. The commission must be charged with research tasks and prudent actions directed at encouraging Maronite circles who reject Muslim pressures and agree to lean on us. (28 May 1954, 1024)

The "prudent actions" continued. On September 22, a mysterious incident occurred. A bus was attacked in Galilee, near Safad. Two persons were killed and ten wounded. Even before an investigation could establish where the aggressors came from (and there were, at that moment, three contradictory hypotheses), Dayan demanded a reprisal action against Lebanon. A Lebanese village suspected to be the attackers' base had already been chosen. Its population would be evacuated in the night, its houses blown up. Sharett objected to Israel's opening a new front along a border which had been totally peaceful since 1948. But this was exactly what Dayan sought: the destabilization of Lebanon and the search for a forerunner to Major Sa'ad Haddad who declared a Maronite state in 1979. The fulfillment of his disruptive plans would have found an ideal point of departure in this terrorist action.

Sharett, however, vetoed an immediate action. At this point the Israeli plot against Lebanon was suspended for other reasons. On October 1, 1955, the U.S. government, through the CIA, gave Israel the "green light" to attack Egypt. The energies of Israel's security establishment became wholly absorbed by the preparations for the war which would take place exactly one year later. In the summer of 1956, in preparation for the Sinai-Suez operation, the close military and political alliance with France was clinched. It would last practically until the eve of the 1967 war, and would prevent Israel, especially following De Gaulle's rise to power in France in 1957, [actually 1958] from implementing its plans for the dismemberment of a country Paris considered as belonging to the French sphere of influence. Israeli bombings of South Lebanon, specifically intended to destabilize that country, were to start in 1968 after the 1967 war, after Dayan's nomination as defense minister in Levi Eshkol's cabinet, and after Israel's definite transition from the alliance with France to that with the United States. [6] From that moment on, this unholy alliance was to use every possible means constantly to escalate terrorist violence and political subversion in Lebanon, according to Israel's blueprints of the fifties. All this, it is hardly necessary to recall, was hatched when no Palestinian guerrillas were remotely in view. [7] If anything, the difficulties Israel encountered throughout all these years in consummating its long-standing ambition to divide Lebanon and separate it from the Arab world constitute one more proof of the external and alien nature of these plots in respect to the authentic aspirations of the Lebanese people regardless of their religious faith.



## Chapter 6

**Sacred Terrorism**

On March 17, 1954, a bus traveling from Eilat to Beersheba was attacked in Ma'aleh Ha'akrabim crossroads. Ten passengers were killed and four survived. According to Israeli army trackers, all traces of the perpetrators disappeared at a distance of ten kilometers from the Jordanian border, inside Israeli territory, due to the rocky nature of the terrain. One of the survivors, a sergeant responsible for security arrangements on the trip, testified that the attackers were "Bedouin." Another survivor, a woman, said they were "five men wearing long robes." The army, according to Sharett, "then dispatched some of its Arab informers to the village of Tel Tsafi, [on the Jordanian side of the border] opposite Sodom." Upon their return, the informers reported that "a group of 8- 10 persons had been seen crossing the borders westward [that day]" by Tel Tsafi villagers. Quite apart from the fact that it was customary, since time immemorial, for the area's nomad population to cross back and forth at that point, there must have been something much too strange about this story of informers and villagers offering evidence. Colonel Hutcheson, the American chairman of the mixed Jordanian-Israeli Armistice Commission, did not take it seriously. Summing up the Commission's inquiry, Colonel Hutcheson in fact officially announced that "from the testimonies of the survivors it is not proved that all the murderers were Arabs." (23 March 1954, 411)

Moreover, in a confidential report dated March 24, and addressed to General Benike, Hutcheson explicitly attributed the attack on the bus to terrorists intent on heightening the tensions in the area as well as on creating trouble for the present government. Thereupon the Israelis left the Armistice Commission in protest, and launched a worldwide campaign against "Arab terrorism" and "bloodthirsty hatred" of Jews. From his retreat in Sdeh Boker, Ben Gurion demanded that Israel occupy Jordanian territory and threatened to leave the Mapai party leadership if Sharett's policy were once again to have the upper hand. Lavon, too, pressed for action. On April 4, the premier wrote to Ben Gurion:

"I heard that after Ma'aleh Ha'akrabim you thought that we should occupy Jordanian territory. In my opinion such a step would have dragged us into a war with a Jordan supported by Britain, while the U.S. would have condemned us in front of the whole world and treated us as an aggressor. For Israel this could have meant disaster and perhaps destruction." (4 April 1954, 453)

Sharett attempted to avert military action. He told officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that "we were all of the opinion that a retaliation for such a bloodshed will only weaken its horrible impression and will put us on the same level as the murderers on the other side. It would be better for us to use the Ma'aleh Ha'akrabim incident as a lever for a political attack on the Powers so that they will exercise unprecedented pressure on Jordan." He also pointed out that a retaliation would weaken the effect of the massive propaganda campaign which, he noted in his diary, should counter "the attention given by the American press to the Jordanian version... according to which the Ma'aleh Ha'akrabim massacre was committed by the Israelis." Not only in public but in his private notes, the prime minister declared his reluctance to believe this version. [9]

Deep down in his heart, however, Sharett too must have had his unconfessed doubts. He not only blocked the proposed military actions, but decided that Israel should refrain from complaining to the Security Council, i.e., from an international debate which he thought might be counterproductive. He felt he had acted wisely when Dayan, in the course of a conversation on April 23, let drop in passing that "he is not convinced that the Ma'aleh Ha'akrabim massacre was the work of an organized military gang." He later learned from the British journalist Jon Kimche that Dayan had said about Ma'aleh Ha'akrabim that "UN reports are often more accurate than ours..." He wrote: "From another source I heard this week that Dayan said to Israeli journalists that it was not proved that the Ma'aleh Ha'akrabim gang was Jordanian – it is possible that it was local."

Of course, it didn't occur to Sharett to open an internal investigation in order to find out the truth. On the contrary, he insisted on the removal of Colonel Hutcheson from his post as a condition for Israel's return to the Armistice Commission. The military, though, were reluctant to give in to his veto on a new attack on the West Bank. Taking for a pretext not Ma'aleh Ha'akrabim but a subsequent minor incident in the Jerusalem corridor area, on the night of March 28 the army launched a massive attack on the village of Nahlin, near Bethlehem. Dozens of civilians were killed and wounded, the houses demolished, the village – another Palestinian village – completely destroyed.

"I said [to Teddy Kollek (then senior aide in the Prime Minister's Office, today mayor of Jerusalem) ]: here we are, back at the point of departure – are we headed for war or do we want to prevent war ? According to Teddy the army leadership is imbued with war appetites ... [They are] completely blind to economic problems and to the complexities of international relations." (31 March 1954, 426)

Arab capitals, too, were persuaded that the Israeli escalation of self-provoked incidents, terrorism and renewed retaliation meant that Israel was preparing the ground for war. They, therefore, stationed military reinforcements along the borders and took strong measures to prevent any infiltration into Israel. This in turn worried the Israelis. "The situation along the borders is better than it has been for a long time and actually it is quite satisfactory," Dayan told a journalist friend who reported it to Sharett on May 17. A new and more subtle strategy of covert aggression was thereupon introduced by the Israeli army. Its aim: to bypass both the Arab security arrangements and Sharett's reluctance to authorize attacks across the border. Small patrols slipped into the West Bank and Gaza with precise directives to engage isolated Egyptian or Jordanian military patrols, or to penetrate into villages for sabotage or murder actions. Invariably, each such action was falsely described later by an official announcement as having occurred in Israeli territory. Once attacked, the military spokesman would explain, the patrol proceeded to pursue the aggressors into enemy territory. Almost daily actions of this kind, carried out by Arik Sharon's special paratroops, caused a great number of casualties. Regularly, the prime minister was left to guess how things really went. Between April and June he noted in his diary that he learned by chance, for example, of the coldblooded murder of a young Palestinian boy who happened to find himself in the Israeli patrol's way near his village in the West Bank. With regard to another incident he wrote:

"Finally I have discovered the secret official version on the Tel Tsafi action – two Arabs that we have sent attacked the Mukhtar who was supposedly said to have been involved in a theft, and killed his wife: in another incident a unit of ours crossed the border "by mistake," in a third incident three of our soldiers were patrolling deep inside Jordanian territory, ran into the National Guard which opened fire (who will check ?), returned fire and killed four. (31 May 1954, 523)

Hundreds of workers in Sodom know the truth and laugh at [the denial of the murder broadcast by] the Israeli radio and the Israeli government.

This situation endangers the life and the enterprise in Sodom... Is the army allowed to act in that way according to its own whims and endanger such a vital enterprise? "(13 May 1954, 514)

On June 27 an Israeli paratrooper unit crossed the border, "by mistake," according to the official communique, 13 kilometers deep into the West Bank, where it attacked and seriously damaged the Jordanian army base of Azun, east of Qalqilia. "Uncivilized, here they go lying again in front of everybody," was Sharett's ingenious comment about the army spokesman's announcement.

What Sharett feared most was Western reaction. A number of U.S. expressions of alarm presented during those weeks to the Israeli government were registered in the premier's diary.

Reports by U.S. embassies in Arab capitals, studied in Washington, have produced in the State Department the conviction that an Israeli plan of retaliations, to be realized according to a pre-fixed timetable, exists, and that the goal is that of a steady escalation of the tension in the area in order to bring about a war. [10] American diplomacy is also convinced that it is Israel's intention to sabotage the U.S. negotiations with Egypt, and also those with Iraq and Turkey, aimed at the establishment of pro-Western alliances. (14 April 1955)



This analysis was correct. It was reconfirmed in the following weeks by Israel's rejection of border security proposals previously accepted by Egypt, including the creation of mixed Israel-Egypt-UN patrols, and the mining of certain border areas. Such arrangements, Dayan affirmed, "will tie our hands." It would be confirmed further in July, when an Israeli terrorist ring charged with sabotaging Western institutions in Cairo and Alexandria was broken up by the Egyptian authorities.

Israeli border terrorism in its various forms was to continue unperturbed during the next two years, up to the very eve of the Sinai-Suez war, and, of course, beyond. Sharett noted an episode "of the worst type" in March 1955, immediately after the Gaza operation.

"The army informed Tkoa ... [responsible for Armistice Commission affairs in the Foreign Ministry] that last night a "private" revenge action was carried out following the killing of the young man and woman, Oded Wegmeister and Shoshana Hartsion, who went on a trip on their own around Ein Gedi [in Jordanian territory]. According to the army version a group of young men, including the girl's brother, Meir Hartsion ... crossed the border, attacked a group of Bedouin, and killed five of them. The army says it supposedly knew that such an initiative was being prepared and intended to prevent it, but according to its information the action was scheduled for tonight and the assumption was that there is time for preventive action, but the boys advanced the action and this is the reason that what happened – happened. Today, the Jordanians issued a completely different version: twenty Israeli soldiers committed the murders – they attacked six Bedouin, killed five and left one alive and told him that this is an act of revenge for the couple ... so that he will tell others about it. The army spokesman tonight announced ... that no army unit was involved in the operation...

This may be taken as a decisive proof that we have decided to pass on to a general bloody offensive on all fronts: yesterday Gaza, today something on the Jordanian border, tomorrow the Syrian DMZ, [Demilitarized Zone] and so on. In the Cabinet meeting tomorrow, I will demand that the killers be put on trial as criminals... (5 March 1955, 816)

Ben Gurion [back in the government as Minister of Defense in the wake of the Lavon Affair] reported to the cabinet... how our four youngsters captured the Bedouin boys one by one, how they took them to the wadi, how they knifed them to death one after the other, and how they interrogated each one of them, before killing him, on the identity of the murderers of the boy and the girl and how they could not understand the answers to their questions, since they do not speak Arabic. The group was headed by Meir Hartsion from kibbutz Fin Harod... They gave themselves up to the army and fully admitted what they have done. (6 March 1955, 817)

Both Ben Gurion and I saw an advantage in trying them in a military court ... educationally it is desirable that the lengthy imprisonment to which they will be condemned will be given by a military court, since the army will not have any respect for a punishment coming from a civilian court... In the evening the Minister of Justice and the General Prosecutor informed me that there is no legal way to turn them over to a military court... I contacted Ben Gurion and arranged that he will give instructions to the army to turn them over to the police... By the way, Hartsion ... and his three friends are paratrooper reservists. (6 March 1955, 817)

[While Purim festivities are being celebrated in the streets of Tel Aviv] The radio is broadcasting cheerful music ... some of which expresses much talent, spiritual grace and longing for original beauty. I meditated on the substance and destiny of this People who is capable of subtle delicacy, of such deep love for people and of such honest aspiration for beauty and nobility, and at the same time cultivates among its best youth youngsters capable of calculated, coldblooded murder, by knifing the bodies of young defenseless Bedouin. Which of these two biblical souls will win over the other in this People? " (8 March 1955, 823)

"Finally the four have been consigned to the police but now they refuse to talk... I phoned Ben Gurion... "It's their legitimate right," he said ... [He added] that their confession to the army cannot serve for their incrimination by a civilian court.

From a juridical viewpoint this may be so, but from a public point of view this is a scandal. (10 March 1955, 828)

The police chief approached the Chief of Staff and asked if the army is willing to aid the police interrogation ... The Chief of Staff said that he will ask the Minister of Defense and then answered in his name that he does not agree to have an interrogation in the army ... it is clear that the army is covering up for the guys.

Isser [Har'el] senses that almost no one in the country condemns the youngsters who murdered the Bedouin. Public opinion is definitely on their side.

When I arrived in Tel Aviv an officer ... came to tell me that the whole revenge operation was organized with the active help of Arik Sharon, the commander of the paratroopers battalion. [11] He had them furnished with arms, food, equipment, had them driven with the unit's car part of the way and ordered that their retreat be secured by his patrols. The officer did not rule out that Dayan, too, knew of the operation in advance. Moreover, the four now refuse to talk upon an explicit order from Arik [Sharon], perhaps approved by Dayan. A campaign is being organized against me because I revealed their identity (to the press). Arik is shouting that I have exposed the men to revenge in the case that they will fall prisoners while fighting in the army at any future time. (11 March 1955, 834)

The four are ready to confess on the condition that they will be guaranteed an amnesty. (13 March 1955, 840)

In the thirties we restrained the emotions of revenge and we educated the public to consider revenge as an absolutely negative impulse. Now, on the contrary, we justify the system of reprisal out of pragmatic considerations ... we have eliminated the mental and moral brakes on this instinct and made it possible... to uphold revenge as a moral value. This notion is held by large parts of the public in general, the masses of youth in particular, but it has crystallized and reached **the value of a sacred principle** in [Sharon's] battalion which becomes the revenge instrument of the State." (31 March 1955, 840)

The British ambassador, Nichols, expressed ... his surprise at the release of the four. According to him, Jordanians arrested the murderer of the couple in Ajur. ... What a contrast between their step and the shameful procedure adopted by us! ... Kesseh [the Secretary General of Mapai] learned from his son [a senior army officer] that the operation had been carried out with the full knowledge of the army, on all levels, including the Chief of Staff and in it were involved senior officers. (28 March 1955, 870)

At a meeting of Mapai's secretariat on January 11, 1961, six years later, Sharett returned to this haunting episode.

The phenomenon that has prevailed among us for years and years is that of insensitivity to acts of wrong ... to moral corruption... For us, an act of wrong is in itself nothing serious, we wake up to it only if the threat of a crisis or a grave result the loss of a position, the loss of power or influence is involved. We don't have a moral approach to moral problems but a pragmatic approach to moral problems... Once, Israeli soldiers murdered a number of Arabs for reasons of blind revenge ... and no conclusion was drawn from that, no one was demoted, no one was removed from office. Then there was Kafr Qasim...[\*See Appendix 2.\_ those responsible have not drawn any conclusions. This, however, does not mean that public opinion, the army, the police, have drawn no conclusion, their conclusion was that Arab blood can be freely shed. And then came the amnesty for those of Kafr Qasim, and some conclusions could be drawn again, and I could go on like this. (11 January 1961, 769)

All this must bring about revulsion in the sense of justice and honesty in public opinion; it must make the State appear in the eyes of the world as a savage state that does not recognize the principles of justice as they have been established and accepted by contemporary society...

## CHAPTER 7

### The Lavon Affair: Terrorism to Coerce the West

ONE: Start immediate action to prevent or postpone Anglo-Egyptian Agreement. Objectives are: one, cultural and information centers; two, economic institutions; three, cars of British representatives and other Britons; four, whichever target whose sabotage could bring about a worsening of diplomatic relations. TWO. Inform us on possibilities of action in Canal Zone. THREE. Listen to us every day at 7 o'clock on wavelength G.

This coded cable was sent to the Israeli spy ring which had been planted in Egypt many months before it was activated in July 1954. The ring originally was to serve as a fifth column during the next war. The cable was preceded by oral instructions given by Colonel Benjamin Givvi, head of Israel's military intelligence, to an officer headed for Cairo to join the ring. These instructions were:

[Our goal is] to break the West's confidence in the existing [Egyptian] regime .... The actions should cause arrests, demonstrations, and expressions of revenge. The Israeli origin should be totally covered while attention should be shifted to any other possible factor. The purpose is to prevent economic and military aid from the West to Egypt. The choice of the precise objectives to be sabotaged will be left to the men on the spot, who should evaluate the possible consequences of each action ... in terms of creating commotion and public disorders. [13]

These orders were carried out between July 2 and July 27, 1954, by the network which was composed of about ten Egyptian Jews under the command of Israeli agents. Negotiations were at their height between Cairo and London for the evacuation of the Canal Zone, and between Cairo and Washington for arms supplies and other aid in connection with a possible U.S.-Egyptian alliance. British and American cultural and informational centers, British-owned cinemas, but also Egyptian public buildings (such as post offices) were bombed in Cairo and Alexandria. Suspicion was shifted to the Muslim Brothers, opponents of Nasser's regime. The Israeli ring was finally discovered and broken up on July 27, when one of its members was caught after a bomb exploded in his pocket in Alexandria.

On that same date Sharett, who knew nothing about the ring, was informed of the facts, and he began to collect evidence on the responsibilities of defense ministry and army officials. He did nothing beyond this, however, until October 5, when Cairo officially announced the imminent trial of the arrested saboteurs. Sharett then fully supported the campaign launched by Israel to present the case as an anti-Jewish frame-up by the Egyptian regime. On December 13, two days after the trial opened in Cairo, the prime minister denounced in the Knesset "the plot ... and the show trial ... against a group of Jews ... victims of false accusations." [\*See Appendix 4.] His party's paper, Davar, went as far as to accuse the Egyptian government of "a Nazi-inspired policy." Horror stories of confessions extracted from the accused under torture circulated in the Israeli and international media. Sharett knew all this to be untrue. "In reality," he wrote in his diary on January 2, 1955, "except for the first two days of their arrest, when there was some beating, the treatment of our men was absolutely decent and humane." But publicly, he kept silent – when he did not himself join the massive anti-Nasser chorus. Even the members of the cabinet, the president of the state, not to speak of the press, were not officially informed until some time in February, when rumors exploded on each street corner in Israel. Then the true story came out, that the government propaganda had been false from beginning to end, that the terrorist ring was indeed planted in Egypt by the Israelis and the only frame-up in question was the one invented against Egypt by the Sharett administration.

By the time the trial was over – two of the accused were condemned to death and executed, eight were condemned to long terms of imprisonment, while the three Israeli

commanders of the operation succeeded in fleeing from Egypt and the fourth committed suicide – other important facts became known to the prime minister. The technical question of who actually gave the order to activate the ring on a certain date was not to be cleared up until six years later, when a fourth or fifth inquiry commission finally and definitely exonerated Lavon from that responsibility, and established that Dayan, Peres, Givli and other, minor, "security" aides had forged documents and falsified testimonies in order to bring about the incrimination of the minister of defense. In 1954-55, Sharett anticipated the findings of that commission, figuring that the entire leadership of the security establishment was guilty of the Affair. For him, the question of who gave the order was secondary to the necessity of pronouncing a judgment on the ideology and politics of Israel's terrorism. Therefore, while he had no doubts about the guilt of the Dayan-Peres-Givli clique, to him Lavon's **political** responsibility was also inescapable.

[People] ask me if I am convinced that "he gave the order ?" ... but let us assume that Givli has acted without instructions ... doesn't the moral responsibility lie all the same on Lavon, who has constantly preached for acts of madness and taught the army leadership the diabolic lesson of how to set the Middle East on fire, how to cause friction, cause bloody confrontations, sabotage targets and property of the Powers [and perform] acts of despair and suicide ?" (10, January 1955, 639)

At this point, Sharett could have changed the history of the Middle East. Had he spoken frankly and directly to public opinion, which was deeply troubled by the events in Egypt – the arrests, the trial, the executions, the contradicting rumors, the climate of intrigue surrounding the "Affair," – tearing up the mask of secrecy, denouncing those who were responsible, exposing his true convictions in regard to Israel's terroristic ideologies and orientations, proposing an alternative, he could have created for himself the conditions in which to use the formal powers that he possessed to make a radical housecleaning in the security establishment. The impact of such an act would have probably been considerable not only in Israel itself but also in the Arab world, especially in Egypt. The downfall of Lavon on one hand and of the Ben Gurionist gang, headed by Dayan and Peres, on the other hand might have blocked Ben Gurion's return to power, and in the longer range, the Sinai-Suez war. Events since then would have taken a different course. [14]

As it was, though, the prime minister had neither the courage nor the temperament required for such an action. Moreover, he always feared that his "moderate" convictions would expose him to accusations of defeatism by the activists of aggressive Zionism. Thus, he took cover behind a variety of pretexts aimed at justifying his passivity even to himself, while in his heart he knew that his objective compliance with the rules of the game imposed by his enemies would boomerang, in the end, against his own career. An open admission of the facts, he tormentedly argued, could be damaging to the people on trial in Cairo; or it could damage Israel's image in the world; or it could bring about a split in the Mapai party, to whose leadership Lavon and Ben Gurion as well as he belonged, causing it to lose its majority in the next elections. Inevitably, he ended up entangled in the plots woven around him by the opposing factions in the government, the army and the party. By mid-February, he had no other choice but to acquiesce to the unspoken ultimatum of Ben Gurion's men and appeal to the Old Man to reenter the cabinet as minister of defense in Lavon's place.

By January 1955, Sharett was well aware that the "Affair" was being used by Lavon and his friends on one hand, the Ben Gurionists on the other, and such extremist pro-militarist factions as Ahdut Ha'avoda [15] – to bring into the open the conflict between the "activist" line and the prime minister's "moderate" politics. He was informed also that Dayan was attempting to organize a *coup d'état* and that Ben Gurion had given it his support. Other persons who had been approached (mainly from among Mapai's younger militants) had rejected the idea of a change of leadership through violence. [16] Dayan wanted to avoid at any cost being exposed by the investigation committee nominated by Sharett as one of those actually responsible for the "Affair." Lavon, on the other hand, threatened to commit suicide if the commission declared him guilty of having given the order.

Teddy [Kollek] painted a horrifying picture of the relations at the top of the security establishment. The Minister of Defense is completely isolated – none of his collaborators speaks to him. During the inquiry, these collaborators [e.g., Peres, Dayan and a number of senior Ministry officials and army officers] plotted to blacken his name and trap him. They captured the man who came from abroad, [the commander of the unit in Egypt Avraham Zeidenberg, also known as "Paul Frank," "Elad," or "the third man"] who escaped from Egypt... instructed him in detail how to

answer, including how to lie to the investigators, and coordinated the testimonies so as to close the trap on Lavon. Teddy is convinced that Lavon must go immediately. Givli, too, must be dismissed, but Dayan, however, should not be touched for the time being, (9 January 1954, 637)

I would never have imagined that we could reach such a horrible state of poisoned relations, the unleashing of the basest instincts of hate and revenge and mutual deceit at the top of our most glorious Ministry [of Defense].

I walk around as a lunatic, horror-stricken and lost, completely helpless ... what should I do? What should I do? (10 January 1954, 639)

Isser [Harel, head of the Shin Bet, stung at the time because the "Affair" had been conducted by the military intelligence, without coordination with his organization] told me hair-raising stories about a conversation which Givli initiated with him proposing to abduct Egyptians not only from the Gaza Strip but also in Cyprus and Europe. He also proposed a crazy plan to blow up the Egyptian Embassy in Amman in case of death sentences in the Cairo trial. (14 January 1955, 654)

To Aharon Barkatt, then secretary general of Mapai, Sharett painted the following picture of Israel's security establishment:

Dayan was ready to hijack planes and kidnap [Arab] officers from trains, but he was shocked by Lavon's suggestion about the Gaza Strip. Maklef [who preceded Dayan as Chief of Staff] demanded a free hand to murder Shishakly but he was shaken when Lavon gave him a crazy order concerning the Syrian DMZ. (25 January 1955, 682)

He [Lavon] inspired and cultivated the negative adventuristic trend in the army and preached the doctrine that not the Arab countries but the Western Powers are the enemy, and the only way to deter them from their plots is through direct actions that will terrorize them. (26 January 1955, 685)

Peres shares the same ideology: he wants to frighten the West into supporting Israel's aims. [Shimon Peres, later Peace Nobel Price...]

## Chapter 8

### **Nasser: Coexistence with Israel is Possible. Ben Gurion's Reply: Operation Gaza**

Commenting on Israel's terrorist actions in Egypt, a U.S. embassy official in Cairo concluded on February 8, 1955 that "Sharett does not have control of the matters if such mad actions can be carried out." [17]

The State Department, the prime minister noted, feared subsequent Israeli provocations to sabotage U.S. relations with the Arab world following the signing of the Ankara-Baghdad pact. The American administration therefore attempted to move simultaneously in two directions in order to save what may be saved in the given situation: it placed pressure on Nasser to negotiate some kind of agreement with the Sharett government, and it offered the Zionist state a security pact. The Israeli premier noted that Kermit Roosevelt Jr. of the CIA was working on the creation of contacts between Israel and Egypt, and that he, Sharett, would nominate Yigael Yadin as his representative. (21 January 1955, 675)

[I met with] Roger Baldwin, the envoy of the U.S. League of Human Rights who visited Cairo... Nasser talked to him about Israel, saying that he is not among those who want to throw Israel into the Mediterranean. He believes in coexistence with Israel and knows that negotiations will open some day. (25 January 1955, 680)

Cable from Eban... the U. S. is ready to sign an agreement with us whereby we shall make a commitment not to extend our borders by force, it will commit itself to come to our aid if we were attacked. (28 January 1955, 691)

Teddy [Kollek] brought a message from Isser's [head of the Security Services] men in Washington. The partners (the CIA) renew their suggestion for a meeting with Nasser, who does not regard the initiative of the meeting canceled because of the outcome of the trial ... He is as willing to meet us as before and the initiative is now up to Israel. (10 February 1955, 716)

[In regard to Washington's proposals for a U.S.-Israel security pact] I cabled Eban that we are willing to accept a clause which obliges us not to extend our borders by force, but we should in no way commit ourselves to desist from any hostile acts because this would mean closing the door on any possibility to carry out reprisal actions. (14 February 1955, 726)

This last phrase indicates that the news of the American proposals, and of possible negotiations between Sharett and Nasser had spread rapidly in the security establishment. The pressures on Sharett were stepped up. On February 17, Ben Gurion accepted the premier's invitation to return to the government as minister of defense. Quoting his landlady, Sharett noted on that day in his diary "that is the end of peace and quiet." Ten days later, in fact

Ben Gurion arrived... with... the Chief of Staff, who was carrying rolled up maps. I understood at once what would be the subject of the conversation... The Chief of Staff's proposal was to hit an Egyptian army base at the entrance to the city of Gaza... [He] estimated that the enemy losses would be about ten ... and that we have to be prepared for a few victims on our side. Ben Gurion insisted that the intention is not to kill but only to destroy buildings. If the Egyptians run away under the shock of the attack, there may be no bloodshed at all.

I approved the plan. The act of infiltration near Rehovot – 30km from the border of the Gaza Strip – shocked the public and a lack of reaction is

unacceptable... In my heart I was sorry that the reprisal would be attributed [by the public] to Ben Gurion. After all, I did authorize a reprisal action ... when Ben Gurion was away from the government, and it was purely by chance that the operation did not take place. I would have approved this one, too, regardless of Ben Gurion being the Minister of Defense. (27 February 1955, 799-800)

I am shocked. The number [of Egyptian victims (39 dead and 30 wounded, including a 7-year-old boy,)] changes not only the dimensions of the operation but its very substance; it turns it into an event liable to cause grave political and military complications and dangers... The army spokesman, on instructions from the Minister of Defense, delivered a false version to the press: a unit of ours, after having been attacked supposedly inside our territory, returned the fire and engaged a battle which later developed as it did. Who will believe us? ( 1st March 1955, 804)

It was the same old story: hit and run and try to fool the world.

The embassies should be instructed to condemn Egypt and not to be on the defensive... Now there will be a general impression that while we cry out over our isolation and the dangers to our security, we initiate aggression and reveal ourselves as being bloodthirsty and aspiring to perpetrate mass massacres... it is possible that this outburst will be interpreted as the result of the army and the nation's outrage against the Powers' policy of ignoring the security of their state and will prevent the continuation of that policy to the bitter end. We, at least, have to make sure that this will be the common impression... I dictated a briefing for the embassies ... It is desirable that the press should express the following: (a) Our public opinion had been agitated by the penetration of an Egyptian gang into a densely populated area and its attack on public transportation; (b) It seems that the clash developed into a serious battle as the exchange of fire was going on; (c) Egypt always claims that it is in a state of war with Israel which it demonstrates by acts such as blockade and murders and if there is a state of war, these are the results; (d) This event cannot be detached from the general background of the feeling of isolation which prevails in Israel in view of the West's alliances with the Arab states , . . . the most recent example of which is the Iraq-Turkey Pact whose anti-Israeli goals are particularly evident.

The last argument (d) needs very cautious handling in the sense that it should not be attributed to us and should be confided only to the most loyal [commentators] who must be warned not to appear inspired by our sources.

When I wrote these things [the instructions to the embassies] I still didn't know how crushing is the evidence-that was already published, refuting our official version. The huge amounts of arms and explosives, the tactics of the attack, the blocking and mining of the roads ... the precise coordination of the attack. Who would be foolish enough to believe that such a complicated operation could "develop" from a casual and sudden attack on an Israeli army unit by an Egyptian unit? . . .

I am tormented by thoughts as to whether this is not my greatest failure as Prime Minister. Who knows what will be the political and security consequence" (1 March 1955, 804-805)

One of the immediate and inevitable consequences was the following:

Yesterday ... there was a conversation between [Salahl Gohar [the chief Egyptian representative to the mixed armistice commission]] and [Joseph] Tkoa. The Egyptian representative informed [Tkoa] immediately that right after the previous meeting [which took place immediately following the Gaza attack] ... Nasser told him ... that he had had a personal contact with Israel's Prime Minister and that there were good chances that things would develop in a positive way, but then came the attack on Gaza, and naturally now ... it's off.

Lawson [U.S. Ambassador] thinks that the reason for the warning and the threats [from Arab countries] is fear which has seized the Arab World due to Ben Gurion's comeback. The Gaza attack is interpreted as signaling a decision on our

part to attack on all fronts. The Americans, too, are afraid that it will lead to a new conflagration in the Middle East which will blow up all their plans. Therefore, they wish to obtain from us a definite commitment that similar actions will not be repeated. (12 March 1955, 837)

But it was precisely to prevent a similar commitment that Ben Gurion rejoined the government, and he had no intention of changing his mind. On the contrary, on March 25, less than a month after the attack on Gaza, he proposed to the cabinet that Israel proceed to occupy the Gaza Strip, this time for good. The discussion lasted five whole days and ended with the ministers divided between the opponents of the proposal, headed by Sharett, and Ben Gurion's supporters. With five votes in favor, nine against it, and two abstentions, the plan was rejected, or perhaps simply postponed. The security pact offered by the U.S., however, had to be rejected, because – as Dayan explained in April 1955 – "it would put handcuffs on our military freedom of action." He went into a detailed explanation on May 26, during a meeting with Israel's ambassadors in Washington (Abba Eban), Paris (Ya'acov Tsur) and London (Eliahu Eilat). The conversation was reported to Sharett later by Ya'acob Herzog and Gideon Raphael:

We do not need (Dayan said) a security pact with the U.S.: such a pact will only constitute an obstacle for us. We face no danger at all of an Arab advantage of force for the next 8-10 years. Even if they receive massive military aid from the West, we shall maintain our military superiority thanks to our infinitely greater capacity to assimilate new armaments. The security pact will only handcuff us and deny us the freedom of action which we need in the coming years. Reprisal actions which we couldn't carry out if we were tied to a security pact are our vital lymph ... they make it possible for us to maintain a high level of tension among our population and in the army. Without these actions we would have ceased to be a combative people and without the discipline of a combative people we are lost. We have to cry out that the Negev is in danger, so that young men will go there....

The conclusions from Dayan's words are clear: This State has no international obligations, no economic problems, the question of peace is nonexistent.... It must calculate its steps narrow-mindedly and live on its sword. It must see the sword as the main, if not the only, instrument with which to keep its morale high and to retain its moral tension. Toward this end it may, no – **it must** – invent dangers, and to do this it must adopt the method of provocation-and-revenge... And above all – let us hope for a new war with the Arab countries, so that we may finally get rid of our troubles and acquire our space. (Such a slip of the tongue: Ben Gurion himself said that it would be worth while to pay an Arab a million pounds to start a war.) (26 May 1955, 1021)

On August 14, a U.S. Quaker leader, Elmer Jackson, on a visit to Jerusalem after a meeting in Cairo with Egyptian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Fawzi, told Sharett that Nasser was still interested in normalizing relations with Israel. On October 7, the Egyptian president himself said to New York Times special envoy Kenneth Love: "No Arab says today that we should destroy Israel." [18] But Israel had already made its decisions. [19]



## Chapter 9

**Disperse the Palestinian Refugees ...**

One important reason for the insistence with which Israel pursued its retaliation policy was the desire of the Zionist ruling establishment to exert permanent pressure on the Arab states to remove the Palestinian refugees of the 1949 war from the proximity of the armistice lines, and to disperse them through the Arab world. This was not due, in the early fifties, to military considerations: as we have seen, and as Dayan's above quotation clearly demonstrates, the Israeli government was more interested in the heightening of border tensions than in their elimination. Furthermore, its lack of concern for the security of the Jewish border population was as cynical as its own promotion of a sensation of danger among the settlers through provocation and false propaganda. Moreover, in those years no organized Palestinian resistance movement existed. It was all too obvious that the low level of guerrilla-type activities permitted by the Arab regimes was intended more to reduce the tensions created inside their countries by the presence of the refugees, and to keep the issue on the agenda in the international arena, than to prepare for a war of liberation in Palestine. [20] But the presence of the Palestinian refugees along the armistice lines in Gaza and the West Bank was not only a constant reminder of **the illegitimacy of Israel's territorial conquests in 1948-49 and of its violation of UN resolutions calling for repatriation**, it was also a living, physical landmark along borders which Israel had no intention of accepting as definite limits to its territorial expansion. In other words, as long as masses of Palestinians were still concentrated on Palestinian soil, the Israeli rulers argued, there was both the risk of international pressure in support of their claim to return to their homes, and little likelihood for international permission for Israel to cancel the geopolitical concept of Palestine entirely, substituting it with that of "Eretz-Israel."

It must be underlined at this point that Sharett's position on the Palestinian question did not differ, except regarding the use of military methods to disperse them, from that of the "activists." He had totally rejected Count Bernadotte's repeated pleas in 1948 for a return of the refugees to their homes (Folke Bernadotte *To Jerusalem*, London, 1951). A year later, he ridiculed the position of the General Zionist Party in favor of a Palestinian independent state in the West Bank and against an agreement with King Abdullah on the division of the West Bank between Israel and Jordan (*Divrei, Haknesset*, Jerusalem, 1949). In his *Diary*, there are numerous references to negotiations attempted by his senior aides at the foreign ministry with Arab representatives or exiles aimed at resettling the Palestinians in countries such as Libya, Syria or Iraq. (Among others, Mustafa Abdul Mun'im, Deputy Secretary General of the Arab League is quoted by Sharett on May 23, 1954, as having affirmed that "the refugees should be settled in the neighboring countries, or, if capital is available, in Sinai.") On June 30, 1954, Sharett met with two representatives of a Union of Palestinian Refugees, Aziz Shehadeh from Jaffa and Mahmud Yahia from Tantura, in regard to the payment of compensation. Finally, on May 28, 1955, Sharett's ideas on the question of the Palestinian refugees were unequivocally expressed in his instructions to Israel's ambassadors in connection with the Security Pact offered to Israel by the U.S., which the foreign minister suspected might include some conditions: "There may be an attempt to reach peace by pressuring us to make concessions on the question of territory and the refugees. I warned [the ambassadors] against any thought of the possibility of returning a few tens of thousands of refugees, **even at the price of peace.**"

And this was the "liberal" Zionist leader who claimed to be an expert on Arab affairs because he had lived for two years, during his adolescence, in an Arab village in the West Bank; because he knew Arabic; because he had lived in Syria during his military service in the Turkish army. On the whole, his attitude toward the Palestinians is well illustrated by a note in his *Diary* on November 15, 1953. It refers to a report made that day to the cabinet meeting by Colonel Yitzhak Shani, then chief military governor of the Arab minority in Israel. (As is obvious,

those whom Sharett calls infiltrators were forcefully expelled Palestinian Arabs trying to return to their home villages or to reestablish contacts with their families who remained under Israeli rule.)

In the last three years [Shani reported] 20,000 infiltrators settled in Israel, in addition to 30,000 who returned immediately after the war... Only because these 20,000 have not been given permanent documents has the brake been put on the flow of infiltration directed toward settlement. To abolish the military government would mean to open the border areas to undisturbed infiltration and to increasing penetration toward the interior of the country. Even as things are, around 19,000 Arabs in Galilee are in possession of permanent permits to move freely around but only to the West and the South and not toward the North and the East... It is true that the troublesome problem of the evacuees must be liquidated through a permanent resettlement, but the evacuees firmly refuse to settle on land belonging to refugees who are on the other side of the border... Even when stone houses are built for them, they refuse to settle in them if they are built on absentee land.... The Arabs who continue to live on their land enjoy advantages, since their production costs are much lower than those of the Jews. In addition they are exempt from spending money and engaging manpower for vigilance, as the infiltrators don't touch their property ... It may be assumed that after this lecture the "General Zionists" demand that the military government be abolished would finally be silenced. (15 November 1953, 150)

Throughout 1953-54 Sharett periodically referred in his diary to proposals made by Ben Gurion, Dayan, Lavon and others to present Egypt with an ultimatum: either it evacuates all the Palestinian refugees from Gaza and disperses them inside Egypt, or else. The description of the Cabinet discussion in the last week of March 1955 on Ben Gurion's demand for the occupation of Gaza, offers more details:

The Defense Minister's proposal is that Israel declare invalid the armistice agreement with Egypt, and thus resume its "right" to renew the (1948-49) war ... I have condemned the twisted logic in Ben Gurion's reliance on the violation of the armistice agreement by Egypt, in order to justify the declaration on our part that this agreement does not exist any more and thus we are allowed to resume the war... Let us assume that there are 200,000 Arabs [in the Gaza Strip]. Let us assume that half of them will run or will be made to run to the Hebron Hills. Obviously they will run away without anything and shortly after they establish for themselves some stable environment, they will become again a riotous and homeless mob. It is easy to imagine the outrage and hate and bitterness and the desire for revenge that will animate them... And we shall still have 100,000 of them in the Strip, and it is easy to imagine what means we shall resort to in order to repress them and what waves of hatred we shall create again and what kind of headlines we shall receive in the international press. The first round would be: Israel aggressively invades the Gaza Strip. The second: Israel causes again the terrified flight of masses of Arab refugees. (27 March 1955, 865)

In yet another six-hour cabinet meeting Sharett continues his arguments:

What we succeeded in achieving in 1948, cannot be repeated whenever we desire it. Today we must accept our existing frontiers and try to relax the tensions with our neighbors to prepare the ground for peace and strengthen our relations with the Powers... Finally I proved that the occupation of the Gaza Strip will not resolve any security problem, as the refugees will continue to constitute the same trouble, and even more so, as their hate will be rekindled by the atrocities that we shall cause them to suffer during the occupation. (29 March 1955, 873)

Ben Gurion's speech was full of anger against those who disagree with him and who are in his opinion incapable of seeing the fatal forecast and cannot understand that we can only be delivered by daring action, if it will be performed in time, before the opportunity is missed... The problem of the refugees is indeed a pain in the neck, but nevertheless we shall chase them to Jordan. (ibid., 874-875)

## Chapter 10

### ... and Topple Nasser's Regime

At the same cabinet meeting Ben Gurion, according to Sharett's *Diary*:

Tried to prove that Egypt aspires to dominate Africa, westwards to Morocco and southwards to South Africa where one day the blacks will get up and massacre the two million whites and then subject themselves to Egypt's moral authority.... Nasser, [he said] will probably not react to the occupation of the Gaza Strip because his regime is based solely on the army, and if he tries to fight back he will be defeated and his regime will collapse. The Arab States will probably not come to Nasser's aid anyway. Finally, the Western powers will not react ... militarily. England will not invade the Negev – "and if she will, we shall fight and throw her out in disgrace..." Our force is in the accomplishment of facts – this is the only way for us to become a political factor which has to be taken into consideration. This is the right moment because the Arab world is divided and Egypt has not yet signed an agreement with the U.S. or England. (29 March 1955, 874-75.)

To prevent an alliance between the West and the Arab world, especially with the most important Arab country – Egypt – was (and was to remain) Israel's main goal. This had nothing to do with Israel's security. On the contrary, Ben Gurion's policy was directed at preventing guarantees from being imposed on the Zionist state by the U.S. Such guarantees would necessarily imply the achievement of a minimum agreement between Israel and the Arab world (definition of the borders, a "face-saving" solution for the Palestinian refugees). The basic motivation was also clearly stated: the use of force was "the only way" for Israel to become a hegemonic power in the region, possibly in alliance with the West. Nasser had to be eliminated not because his regime constituted a danger for Israel, but because an alliance between the West and his prestigious leadership in the third world, and in the Middle East, would inevitably lead to a peace agreement which in turn would cause the Zionist state to be relativized as just one of the region's national societies.

That Nasser's regime did not constitute any danger to Israel's existence was well known at the time to the Israelis. Sharett noted:

I expressed my doubts in regard to the [much publicized by Israel] growth of Egypt's military strength, seeing that this year all the energies of the [Egyptian] army have been absorbed in domestic conflicts and rivalries... About 500 officers, among the best in the Egyptian forces, left the military services [after Nasser replaced Nuguib] and passed to administrative and political activities. (30 March 1955)

But Israel's worldwide campaign had nothing whatever to do with the true facts:

Ben Gurion [in the cabinet meeting] declared that Nasser is the most dangerous enemy of Israel and is plotting to destroy her ... It is not clear where he gets this confidence that [enables him] to express [this] so definitely and decisively as if it were based on solid facts. (24 April 1955)

It was simply directed to mobilize international opinion against Egypt, and prepare a favorable ground for Israel's imminent military aggression. At the same time, however, Israeli officials were instructed to convince Western governments that the instability of Nasser's regime did not make it worthy of Western aid and support. As always when their end justified the means, Israel's rulers were not at all concerned about the contradiction between their parallel campaigns. To prove Nasser's weakness they resorted to testimonies by Egyptians:

Gideon Raphael... reported on ... an interesting meeting with one of the major Egyptian capitalists, Aboud Pasha... Aboud turned out to be a close friend of Nasser. It seems that he conserved and even strengthened his status under the new regime which is an enemy of capitalism... According to Aboud, Nasser's position is unstable in his own ranks. He is constantly nervous and does not know whom to please first. The leadership of the group is divided and conflicts explode between the officers, each of whom leans on the support of a different corps – the air force, the navy, ground forces. The situation is very instable and it is difficult to know what will happen. (31 July 1955, 1100)

As well as to new attempts at subversion:

I sat with Josh Palmon... to hear a report on the continuation of the negotiations with the leaders of the Sudanese Umma party... One of them will visit Israel soon. Some more possibilities of developing commercial connections between us and them. It is necessary to detach Sudan from economic dependence upon Egypt, and from its sphere of influence.

We are maintaining contacts with Wafd [rightist, nationalist, anti-Nasser Party] exiles in London... (3 October 1955)

The Eisenhower administration seemed divided. State Department pro-Arab elements, according to Sharett, were still pressing for a Western-Arab alliance in the Middle East, and considered an agreement between Washington and Cairo essential to the security and stability of the region, in the words of Israel's foreign minister. But Israeli pressures were increasingly bearing fruit. After years of contacts and negotiations, Egyptian requests for defensive armaments resulted in no more than, as Mohammed Hassanein Heykal later disclosed, a personal present made to General Neguib in the form of a decorative pistol to wear at ceremonies, and this while Israel's military aggression was growing more brazen from day to day. No economic aid to speak of was reaching Egypt from the West. And John Foster Dulles' commitment to help Egypt in the construction of the Aswan Dam had faded into thin air. Cairo was humiliated, while Western verbal regrets after the devastating Israeli attack on Gaza did not seem to have affected in any way Israel's preparations for an all-out war. Ben Gurion made a public speech on August 8 in which he criticized Sharett's policy as being aimed only at pleasing the gentiles and pointed towards the destruction of the state. He announced that from now on the foreign minister's duty will be none else than to explain to the world the defense ministry's security policies. These factors contributed to extinguishing Cairo's last illusions. By the end of September 1955, Egypt signed an arms deal with Czechoslovakia intended to secure its survival and self-defense.

On October 1st

Teddy [Kollek] brought in a classified cable from Washington. Our "partner" named [in code] "Ben" [Kermit Roosevelt of the CIA] ... describes the terrible confusion prevailing in the State Department under the shock of the Nasser-Czech "i.e., Russian" deal. (Henry) Byroade and all the others who were in favor of U. S. support to Egypt lost their say completely. He adds: "We are surprised at your silence." When our man asked for the meaning of these words, and whether we are expected to go to war, the answer was: "if, when the Soviet arms arrive, you will hit Egypt no one will protest." (1st October 1955, 1182)

In the cabinet meeting on October 3 at one stage Ben Gurion declared:

"If they really get Migs ... I will support their bombing! We can do it!" I understood that he read the cable from Washington. The wild seed has fallen on fertile ground. (3 October 1955)

Isser [Harel, Shin Bet chief] likewise concludes that the U.S. is hinting to us that as far as they are concerned, we have a free hand and God bless us if we act audaciously... Now ... the U.S. is interested in toppling Nasser's regime,... but it does not dare at the moment to use the methods it adopted to topple the leftist government of Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala [1954] and of Mossadegh in Iran [1953]... It prefers its work to be done by Israel.

Hence, Isser proposes seriously and pressingly ... that we carry out our plan for the occupation of the Gaza Strip now... The situation is changed and there are other reasons which determine that it is "time to act." First the discovery of oil near the Strip ... its defense requires dominating the Strip – this alone is worth dealing with the troublesome question of the refugees. Second, Egypt's betrayal of the West. This fact eliminates the danger of an armed intervention of the Powers against us. (ibid., 1186)

Precisely one year later Dayan's troops occupied the Gaza Strip, Sinai, and the Straits of Tiran and were arrayed along the shore of the Suez Canal to watch the spectacular French and British aerial bombardments of Ismailia and Suez, accompanied by the rapid landing of troops in the Canal Zone. Six months before, as a result of a personal decision of Ben Gurion, Sharett had been eliminated from the government. The premiership had been resumed by the Old Man in November 1955, one month after the U.S. "green light" for an Israeli invasion of Egypt. A vicious whisper campaign had been mounted, to present the foreign minister as incapable of obtaining for Israel the arms necessary for its defense. The atmosphere surrounding Sharett's departure is significant:

.....[Around] the table [in the Cabinet meeting] they all sat in silence. None of my colleagues raised his head to look at me. No one got up to shake my hand, despite everything. It was as if all their mental capacities were paralyzed, as if the freedom of movement was banned from their bodies, the freedom of expression was taken away from their hearts and the freedom of independent action from their consciences. They sat heavy and staring in their silence. Thus I crossed the whole length of the meeting room, and left. ( 18 June 1956)

In the next months the U.S. authorized France to divert to Israel Mirage planes which were already earmarked for NATO. At the moment of the Suez offensive the U.S. feigned surprise, and even indignation. But it made a clear distinction between England and France, the beaten rivals in the inter-imperialist struggle for influence in the Middle East, and Israel. The immediate retreat of Britain and France from Egypt was requested by President Eisenhower within a matter of hours. Israel's withdrawal from Gaza and Sinai was pushed through only four months later and then only thanks to heavy Soviet pressure which threatened to submerge the West in unforeseen complications to world peace. Israel, with the CIA authorization in its pocket, was granted the mitigating circumstances of "security needs" in world opinion's judgment on that criminal war. The precedent had thus been set, and could only mean that the retreat from Gaza and Sinai was to be purely tactical, as the 1967 war later proved.

As a so-called moderate Zionist, Moshe Sharett's lifelong assumption had been that Israel's survival would be impossible without the support of the West, but that Western so-called morality as well as Western objective interests in the Middle East would never allow the West to support a Jewish state which "behaves according to the laws of the jungle" and raises terrorism to the level of a sacred principle. To prominent Mapai leader David Hacohen, who declared himself convinced that the Israelis should behave in the Middle East as if they were crazy in order to terrorize the Arabs and blackmail the West, he replied: If we shall behave like madmen, we shall be treated as such – interned in a lunatic asylum and isolated from the world. But his adversaries proved him wrong, thereby dealing a crushing blow to his personality as well as to the very hypothesis of moderate Zionism. What they proved was that his supposedly rational assumption was not only fallacious but also unrealistic. In the final analysis the West, and in particular the U.S., let itself be frightened, or blackmailed, into supporting Israel's megalomaniac ambitions, because an objective relationship of complicity already existed and because once pushed into the open this complicity proved capable of serving the cause of Western power politics in the region. [21]

Just as Zionism, based on the de-Palestinization and the Judaisation of Palestine, was intrinsically racist and immoral, thus the West, in reality, had no use for a Jewish state in the Middle East which did not behave according to the laws of the jungle, and whose terrorism could not be relied on as a major instrument for the oppression of the peoples of the region. There was a fatal but coherent logic in this newly acquired equation, which would determine the course of future events:

I go on repeating to myself: nowadays admit that you are the loser! They showed much more daring and dynamism ... they played with fire, and they won. Admit that the balance sheet of the Sinai war is positive. Moral evaluations apart, Israel's political importance in the world has grown enormously... You remain alone.

Only your son Coby is with you. The public, even your own public, does not share your position. On the contrary... the public now turns even against its "masters" and its bitterness against the retreat [from Sinai and Gaza] is developing into a tendency to change the political balance in this country in favor of Begin. (4 April 1957)

## NOTES

1. In his *Diary* Sharett reports consultations with the Israeli ambassador to Brazil, David Shealtiel, concerning the settlement in that country, of half a million Palestinian refugees – one hundred thousand "in the first stage." Sharett expresses enthusiasm for the project.

2. Negotiations on the implementation of a UN-approved plan for the division of Jordan River water among Israel, Syria and Jordan were conducted at the time by President Eisenhower's special envoy Erric Johnston, Israel, however, was rapidly nearing the completion of its own deviation project. No agreement was ever concluded.

3. In September 1979, following the publication of Sharett's *Diary*, an Israeli citizen on a radio debate asked Arik Sharon about the massacre, in which sixty nine civilians were killed. Sharon, who personally commanded the Kibya action, and who was a loyal member of Mapai in the 1950s, according to Sharett, is today the minister in the Begin government responsible for the colonization of the West Bank and Gaza. A report on this radio discussion in the Histadrut Labor Party newspaper *Davar*, of 14 September 1979, gives the following comments:

The responsibility for the killing of 69 civilians in Kibya, according to Sharon, falls on the victims themselves. At that time the Arab population was used to the Army's reaching just the edge of the village, dynamiting just one house, and leaving. Therefore, the people stayed in their houses. Thus, any attempt to claim that in Kibya there was a cold-blooded action to murder women and children should be described as a completely unfounded accusation.

Sharon decided personally to give an energetic character to that action. He instructed that 600 kilograms of explosives be taken along. Forty -five houses in the village were marked to be blown up, among which was the school. The task force did not know that people were hiding in the cellars and the upper floors. The houses were blown up after a superficial examination of the ground floor alone. This is why the number of victims was so high.

Kibya was, according to all evidence, a tragic error. A more cautious commander may, have avoided it. Had Arik Sharon changed for the better since, he would have now said that he was sorry. He did not.

*Davar* editorialist Nahum Barnea ostensibly attacks Sharon, but in fact he obviously tends to excuse the murderous operation. Kibya was no "tragic error" but a deliberate crime, as the context of Sharon's story proves. Before going into action, Sharett's soldiers, moreover, were given a dramatic description of a previous incident in Yahud (an Arab village repopulated with Israeli Jews) in which a woman was killed. Yahud served as a pretext for the Kibya attack, although it was known that Kibya had no other relation to the earlier episode. Clearly, the intention was to incite the soldiers emotionally to exterminate the greatest possible number of civilians and have no qualms about the killing of women and children. Significantly, upon his return from Kibya, Sharon reported the number of victims to have been ten to twelve: "We counted only the military dead, the soldiers of the Jordanian Region's garrison," he said in the above broadcast.

4. At that time Israel was literally flooding the world with propaganda in which it catastrophically pictured itself as threatened in its daily existence by growing Arab power. It is also significant that the above disclosures were made confidentially to American Zionist leaders, who thus became involved in Israel's two-faced strategy. The use of the term "Western Eretz Israel" is particularly illuminating. It implies that, in contrast with their official statements at that time, the concept of an "Eastern Eretz Israel" (i.e., Jordan) has never been eliminated from the political vocabulary of the Israeli leadership.

5. See *Ha'aretz* of 29 June 1979, commenting on a recent wave of terrorist actions in Syria attributed to the Muslim Brothers: "If Syria assumes its Sunni character again, as it was prior to the rise of the Ba'ath and the Alawites to power, new and varied opportunities may open up to Israel, Lebanon and the whole Middle East. In view of such a possibility, Israel must keep vigilant and alert: **It must not miss an opportunity which might be unrepeatable**". A quarter of a century later, the same formula is being used. In general, a close reading of the Israeli press through 1979 suggests that Israel is again deploying efforts in various directions to bring about the fall of Assad's regime, and to install a Damascus regime which would go along with Israeli policies. "Israel is aiming at installing a Sadat in Damascus," one Israeli political figure told us in September 1979.

6. This is not to say, obviously, that no alliance between Israel and the US existed prior to 1967. Through the fifties collaboration was particularly close between Israel's special services and the CIA. It is certainly not accidental that following the Israeli leadership's outlining of plans to disrupt Lebanon, the U.S. – according to CIA director William Colby in testimony to the Senate Subcommittee on Refugees in July, 1976 – "supplied arms in the fifties to Christians in Lebanon in the framework of the use of religious and ethnic minorities in the fight against communism". However, starting in the summer of 1956, and going well into the sixties, Israel was dependent on France for arms supplies and could not have acted openly against France's wishes. The end of France's colonial war against Algeria and De Gaulle's growing impatience with Israel's arrogance led to the termination of the French-Israeli special relationship in 1967, and to its substitution by the exclusive U.S.-Israel one.

7. Israel's systematic genocide in Lebanon for over a decade, which has recently reached a degree of cynical brutality unequalled in contemporary history outside of U.S. action in Indochina, bears no justification in any case. In the light of the documentation we have presented, Israel's pretense of acting in self defense and in defense of Lebanon's Christians against PLO terror becomes even more ridiculous as well as outrageous. This pretense is all too often supported by Western media and governments. Undoubtedly, Israel's permanent representative to the UN, Yehuda Blum, counts cynically on the ignorance of the general public when he says: "Lebanon's fundamental problems date back many years. The situation in the South should be considered only a byproduct and a symptom of those problems" (*The Nation*, 15 September 1979). This is how, he describes Israel's direct massacre of civilian populations and the other daily attacks, devastation and torture, carried out with U.S.-made arms and under Israeli protection by Israel's isolationist Maronite puppets commanded by Major Sa'ad Haddad.

8. Sharett hinted that the report was clandestinely intercepted by the Israelis. He also aired the possibility that Hutcheson intended to refer to elements from the Irgun, acting against his government and then rejected this hypothesis. In this connection it is interesting to recall that in a debate in the Knesset (*Divrei Haknesset Hashnua*, p. 654) on January 25, 1955, a Herut spokesman, Arie Altmann, attacked the government for its "weaknesses" and added: "If the government will not comply with its duties in the security field, don't be surprised if one day you will be confronted with the surprising phenomena of private initiatives, and not one initiative, but a very complex and ramified one...". In his *Mistraim Ve'HaaFedayeen* (see note 20) Ehud Ya'ari mentions the

existence at that time of a terrorist group operating in border areas under the name of "Tadmor Group" of which – he says – "no details are yet available." These disclosures suggest that a close cooperation existed at that time, on an operative-clandestine level, between the pre-state Zionist organizations – the Irgun and the Stern gang, which were officially dissolved in 1948 but in fact continued to act militarily – and regular army or "security" units such as the paratroopers corps and Sharon's Unit 101. The latter – Ya'ari recalls – "operated its own unpublicized 'infiltrations' into the Gaza Strip... accomplishing actions such as the attack on the refugee camp at Al Burj, near Gaza, on August 31, 1953." Further research on this subject might reveal that the extent of the acts of aggressive provocations by Israeli forces across the armistice lines were much vaster than has ever been known publicly. However, the most important aspect of these relations lies in their political significance, which offers a completely new key to the interpretation of the history of the Zionist state. In fact, they constitute a decisive refutation of the accepted thesis according to which a distinct division, marked by ideological, political and pragmatic antagonisms, existed at least up to 1965 between labor Zionism and the so-called "irrational Zionism" of Revisionist origin.

9. Israel launched a particularly virulent campaign about Ma'aleh Ha'akrabim, and renewed the campaign at the time of, and as a justification of, the 1956 attack on Egypt.

10. The euphemistic use of the term "retaliation" in the context of actions to be realized according to a pre-fixed plan corresponds to Dayan's description of the "reprisal" policy. Reminiscent of notorious euphemisms from the Vietnam war ("pacification", "neutralization", "Vietnamization"), the term has been used until recently to describe Israel's massacres in Lebanon.

11. Today Sharon is minister of agriculture in Begin's government, and responsible for the colonization of the West Bank and Gaza. He was commander of the notorious "Unit 101," which engaged in actions against civilian populations across the armistice lines. In a recent radio debate (see note 3 above), Sharon was asked about this episode. "As to Meir Hartsion," Sharon said, "I want to say: it is unfortunate that there are no more men like him, with his loyalty, his love for the country, and his contribution to raise the combat level of the Israeli army. It is shameful that a man who fought, and fought for you too, you call him a murderer". *Davar*, 14 September 1979)

12. It must be noted that the term "terrorism" was not in vogue at that time. Sharett, in fact, uses the word "revenge" and "blind revenge." It is clear that he was groping for a word that would correspond exactly to today's use of "terrorism."

13. Both texts are reproduced from the Acts of the Olshan-Dori Inquiry Commission of the "Affair," annexed to the *Diary*, pages 659, 664, respectively.

14. In a letter to Ben Gurion dated March 6, 1961 Sharett confirmed: "Why did I refuse then to approve the firing of Peres? Because his removal **at that period** would have been interpreted as an admission that the leadership of Israel's security establishment was responsible for the savage actions in Cairo" (p. 789). In general, very little is known outside Israel about the "Affair" and its complicated ramifications and implications which have profoundly corroded and influenced Israel's political life for years. It is therefore understandable that even an excellent reporter such as David Hirst could be misled to think that Lavon shared Sharett's moderate line ( *The Gun and the Olive Branch*, London: Futura Publications, 1976). In fact Lavon was an ardent "activist" who missed no occasion to preach the use of violence and this was why Ben Gurion, when leaving for Sdeh Boker, left him in charge of "his" defense ministry. Later, however, Ben Gurion began to suspect that through his activist zeal, Lavon also sought to supplant him at the head of the security establishment. Thus, a complicated rivalry involving these two members of Mapai's leadership – as well, as for their own reasons and ambitions – Ben Gurion's younger heirs – especially Peres and Dayan – became interwoven in the intrigues to which the "Affair" had given rise.

15. Ahdut Ha'avoda, whose best known leaders were Yigal Allon and Israel Galili, united with Mapai to form the Labor Party in the sixties.

16. The history of the attempts to organize coups d'état in Israel is also little known outside its borders. In 1957 one such attempt was plotted by a group of officers who wished to prevent the retreat from Gaza and Sinai, which Ben Gurion had reluctantly accepted under heavy international pressure. In late May 1967, it was under the threat of a military coup that Premier Levi Eshkol co-opted opposition Knesset member Moshe Dayan into his government as minister of defense, thereby definitely acquiescing in the army's decision to go to war.

17. This comment was made by Lewis Jones, an embassy aide in Cairo, who Sharett says "is considered a personal friend of Nahum Goldman and Teddy Kollek and is well known to us for his fair attitude to Israel." Jones also expressed the opinion that Israeli protests against the Cairo sentences should not be taken too seriously: "Even if there will be a hanging [death sentence] it would not be a disaster [for the Israelis] ... since it will probably help [the Israelis] to collect more money in the US." (8 February 1955, p. 712)

18. (7 October 1955, p. 1197). See also Kenneth Love, *Suez* (McGraw-Hill, 1969). Sharett here told the story of how a previous news agency dispatch on the interview with Love, attributed to Nasser the phrase "we should destroy Israel." Sharett couldn't believe this to be true, and he professed to have been relieved when the correction of what was reported as a "telex transmission error" arrived, confirming his own view of Nasser's conciliatory policies.

19. A detailed comparison of the above realities with, among others, the account and analysis of the events of that period as provided by Nadav Safran in his *Israel – The Embattled Ally* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978) would throw a significant light on the falsifications that continue to permeate a certain Zionist-inspired historiography to this day. According to Safran, Nasser's attitude shifted in 1955 "from one of apparent moderation to one that seemed bent on ... leading the Arab States in an assault on Israel" and the "apparent willingness of the Arab States to accept Jewish State" changed in the mid-fifties to a "commitment to eliminate that State," (See also note 20.)

20. See Abu Iyad, *Palestiniens sans patrie* (Paris: 1979) and Ehud Ya'ari, *Mitsraim Ve'HaFedayeen* (Givat Haviva, 1975). The first, by one of the leading figures of Fatah, provides a direct account, from personal experience, of the Egyptian repression of the attempts by the Palestinian refugees in Gaza to organize resistance cells. The second consists of a collection of documents captured by the Israeli intelligence during the 1956 and 1967 wars in Gaza, Sinai and the West Bank, which demonstrate the efforts by the Egyptian and Jordanian governments to suppress any infiltration to Israel, control the borders, and repress the demands by



the population for adequate defense measures to protect them against Israeli incursions, including the demand for a distribution of arms. The following constitute the main points in the evidence contained in Ya'ari's documents:

- At the end of 1953, the Egyptian administration of Gaza reported to the War Ministry in Cairo on arrests of infiltrators and actions to block their access routes to the border. At that same time police and army troops were employed in refugee camps attacked by Israel to disperse demonstrators asking for arms and protesting plans to settle Palestinian refugees in an area near Al Arish.
- A special civil guard force was created at the end of 1953 to control the Palestinian refugee camps.
- In 1954 this force was reinforced. In that year, the Egyptian representative in the Mixed Armistice Commission replied to a complaint by Israeli representative Arie Shalev in regard to infiltrations: "We are not sending them, and as far as we are concerned, you can kill them."
- "There is not one single Egyptian document [among those captured and examined] that speaks positively of infiltrations or sabotage actions. On the contrary, they all reflect an official policy of suppression and energetic directives to this effect," according to Ya'ari's conclusion. This has been confirmed also from other sources:

General E. L. M. Burns, who was the head of the UN Observers Corps in the Middle East, reported in his book *Between Arab and Israeli* (London, 1962) that Nasser told him in November 1954 that he wanted calm to reign in the Gaza Strip.

Keith Wheelock, in his *Nasser's New Egypt* (London, 1960) wrote that it was "clear that the Egyptian government wishes to avoid fighting along the border, if only because the great plan for internal development left very limited resources for a reinforcement of the Egyptian army."

Among the documents presented by Ya'ari there is also a memorandum of a meeting held at the office of the Egyptian governor of the Gaza Strip, Yussef Al Agrudi, on January 29, 1955, one month before the Israeli attack on Gaza, in which the following measures aimed at controlling the border were decided among the rest :

- Prohibition of traffic from sunset to dawn in the area east of the Gaza-Rafah road, including the refugee camp of Jebelyiah.
- An order to open fire on any infiltrator. All the mukhtars (village chief) were required to report persons missing from their villages or tribes. Warnings were to be issued through the media against infiltration. A detention camp was to be set up for persons suspected of infiltration against whom no sufficient evidence existed to bring them to trial.
- Distribution of food rations to refugees who did not appear personally to receive the rations would be stopped.

According to Ya'ari, finally:

The Israeli army attack on Gaza on February 28, 1955 was ... a decisive turning point in the relations between Israel and Egypt. Nasser as well as many Western diplomats and analysts have spoken of it as a turning point in Cairo's policies. Nasser himself explained on innumerable occasions that the attack was the moment of truth in which he understood there was no chance for the [conciliatory] line adopted by Egypt until then. He finally perceived the dimensions of the Israeli problem, and therefore appealed for Soviet armaments...

The Gaza action occurred at a moment of relative tranquility following the enforcement of repressive measures decided on by the Egyptian administration in the Strip. Hence, the explanation for Ben Gurion's decision to order the attack ... is to be sought elsewhere.

The Israeli attack on Gaza unleashed huge demonstrations in the Strip and clashes between the local population and the Egyptian army. Due to further Israeli provocations the protests continued, and in May the Egyptian government was forced to consent to the activities of fedayeen units for sabotage actions in Israel. These units were, however, placed under the strict control of the Egyptian army so that their activity could again be limited several months later. "In any case," is Ya'ari's conclusion, "there is no doubt that the appearance of Fedayeen under direct Egyptian guidance was a phenomenon which emerged following the Israeli attack on Gaza."

It is worth mentioning here that the documents presented by Ya'ari also include detailed information on two terrorist actions undertaken by Israeli intelligence in July 1956. In both cases senior Egyptian officers were killed by explosive packages, disguised as books. In the first case, the victim was Lt. General Mustafa Hafez, the commander of Egyptian intelligence in the Gaza Strip. Hafez emerges from the documents as a man who opposed infiltrations into Israel as well as the inclusion of Palestinians in the Civil Guard. In fact in a forged version of the circumstances of his assassination, Israel tried to attribute the murder to a settling of accounts on behalf of outraged refugees, having obviously reason to believe that this version would be accepted as credible. The other victim was the Egyptian military attaché in Amman, according to Ya'ari, Hafez's collaborator in the recruitment of Fedayeen and their infiltration into Israel from Jordanian territory. Ya'ari states that on the basis of the documents in his possession, the contradiction in the description of Hafez's role remains unsolved. The episodes, however, conform to Sharett's conviction in regard to the unrestrained use of terrorism by Israel's security establishment.

On the other hand, Sharett's *Diary* confirms beyond any doubt that Israel's security establishment strongly opposed all border security arrangements proposed by Egypt, Jordan or the UN. A UN-Egyptian proposal that mixed Egyptian-Israeli-UN patrols operate along the borders to prevent infiltration and mining came to Dayan's knowledge, Sharett noted. The chief of staff exploded with rage. "But I don't want the UN to prevent mining". Obviously, he considered the deterrent effect of the mixed patrols proposal on Israeli incursions into the Strip (see note 8) as more damaging to Israel's security than the occasional infiltrations from the Strip into Israel. In fact, Ben Gurion rejected the proposal on the grounds that it "will tie our hands"

21. See Noam Chomsky in *The Nation*, 22-29 July, 1978, pp. 83-88 for a review of five books on US.-Israeli relations, and his article "Civilized Terrorism" in *Seven Days*, July 1976, pp 22-23.

## APPENDIX 1

### Operation Kibya

Ben Gurion's version of operation Kibya, broadcasted on Israeli Radio on 19 October 1953, as recorded by *Davar*, 20 October 1953.

( ... ) The [Jewish] border settlers in Israel, mostly refugees, people from Arab countries and survivors from the Nazi concentration camps, have, for years, been the target of (...) murderous attacks and had shown a great restraint. Rightfully, they have demanded that their government protect their lives and the Israeli government gave them weapons and trained them to protect themselves.

But the armed forces from Transjordan did not stop their criminal acts, until [the people in] some of the border settlements lost their patience and after the murder of a mother and her two children in Yahud, they attacked, last week, the village of Kibya across the border, that was one of the main centers of the murderers' gangs. Every one of us regrets and suffers when blood is shed anywhere and nobody regrets more than the Israeli government the fact that innocent people were killed in the retaliation act in Kibya. But all the responsibility rests with the government of Transjordan that for many years tolerated and thus encouraged attacks of murder and robbery by armed powers in its country against the citizens of Israel.

**The government of Israel strongly rejects the ridiculous and fantastic version, as if 600 soldiers participated [in the action] against Kibya. We had conducted a thorough check and found out that not even the smallest army unit was missing from its base on the night of the attack on Kibya. (emphasis ours)**

## APPENDIX 2

### "And Then There Was Kafr Qasim..."

On the eve of the 1956 Sinai War, Israeli Brigadier Shadmi, the commander of a battalion on the Israeli-Jordanian border, ordered a night curfew imposed on the "minority" (Arab) villages under his command. These villages were inside the Israeli borders; thus, their inhabitants were Israeli citizens. According to the court records (*Judgments of the District Court, The Military Prosecutor vs. Major Melinki, et. al.*), Shadmi told the commander of a Frontier Guard unit, Major Melinki, that the curfew must be "extremely strict" and that "it would not be enough to arrest those who broke it – they must be shot." He added: "A dead man (or according to other evidence 'a few men') is better than the complications of detention."

The court recordings continue:

He (Melinki) informed the assembled officers that the war had begun, that their units were now under the command of the Israeli Defense Army, and that their task was to impose the curfew in the minority villages from 1700 to 0600, after informing the Mukhtars to this effect at 1630. With regard to the observation of the curfew, Melinki emphasized that it was forbidden to harm inhabitants who stayed in their homes, but that anyone found outside his home (or, according to other witnesses, anyone leaving his home, or anyone breaking the curfew) should be shot dead. He added that there were to be no arrests, and that if a number of people were killed in the night (according to other witnesses: it was desirable that a number

of people should be killed as) this would facilitate the imposition of the curfew during succeeding nights.

... While he was outlining this series of orders, Major Melinki allowed the officers to ask him questions. Lieutenant Franknanthal asked him "What do we do with the dead?" (or, according to other witnesses "with the wounded?") Melinki replied: "Take no notice of them" (or, according to other evidence: "They must not be removed," or, according to a third witness: "There will not be any wounded"). Arie Menches, a section leader, then asked "What about women and children?" to which Melinki replied "No sentimentality" (according to another witness: "They are to be treated like anyone else; the curfew covers them too.") Menches then asked a second question: "What about people returning from their work?" Here Alexandroni tried to intervene, but Melinki silenced him, and answered: "They are to be treated like anyone else" (according to another witness, he added: "it will be just too bad for them, as the Commander said.")

In the minutes of the meeting which were taken down and signed by Melinki a short time after he signed the series of orders, the following appears:

....As from today, at 1700 hours, curfew shall be imposed in the minority villages until 0600 hours, and all who disobey this order will be shot dead.

After this psychological preparation, and the instructions given to the policemen-soldiers to "shoot to kill all who broke the curfew," the unit went out to the village of Kafr Qasim to start its work:

The first to be shot at the western entrance to the village were four quarrymen returning on bicycles from the places where they worked near Petah Tiqva and Ras al-Ain. A short time after the curfew began these four workmen came round the bend in the road pushing their bicycles. When they had gone some ten to fifteen meters along the road towards the school, they were shot from behind at close range, from the left. Two of the four (Ahmad Mahmud Freij and Ali Othman Taha, both 30 years old) were killed outright. The third (Muhammad Mahmud Freij, brother of Ahmad Freij) was wounded in the thigh and the forearm, while the fourth, Abdullah Samir Badir, escaped by throwing himself to the ground. The bicycle of the wounded man, Ahmad, fell on him and covered his body, and he managed to lie motionless throughout the bloody incidents that took place around him. Eventually he crawled into an olive grove and lay under an olive tree until morning. Abdullah was shot at again when he rolled from the road to the sidewalk, whereupon he sighed and pretended to be dead. After the two subsequent massacres, which took place beside him, he hid himself among a flock of sheep, whose shepherd had been killed, and escaped into the village with the flock...

A short time after this killing a shepherd and his twelve year old son came back from the pasture with their flock. They approached the bend along the road from the Jewish colony of Masha. The flock went along the road as far as the village school, the shepherd throwing stones at sheep that had strayed to turn them back on to the Masha road. Two or three soldiers, standing by the bend, opened fire at close range on the shepherd and his son and killed them. Their names were Othman Abdullah Issa, aged 30, and his son Fathi Othman Abdullah Issa, aged twelve.

Note: The translation of the court proceedings appeared in *The Arabs in Israel* by Sabri Jiyris (Monthly Review, 1976). Jiyris sums up: "In the first hour of the curfew, between 5 and 6 PM, the men of the Israeli Frontier Guard killed forty-seven Arab citizens in Kafr Qasim."

## APPENDIX 3

**"Soon the Singing Will Turn Into A Death Moan"**

The following is excerpted from Meir Har-Tzion's *Diary*, published by Levin-Epstein, Ltd., Tel Aviv, 1969. It describes an Israeli raid in Gaza during the early 1950s.

The wide, dry riverbed glitters in the moonlight. We advance, carefully, along the mountain slope. Several houses can be seen. Bushes and shrubbery sway in the breeze, casting their shadows on the ground. In the distance we can see three lights and hear the sounds of Arab music coming out of the homes immersed in darkness. We split up into three groups of four men each. Two groups make their way to the immense refugee camp to the south of our position. The other group marches towards the lonely house in the flat area north of Wadi Gaza. We march forward, trampling over green fields, wading through water canals as the moon bathes us in its scintillating light. Soon, however, the silence will be shattered by bullets, explosions, and the screams of those who are now sleeping peacefully. We advance quickly and enter one of the houses – "Mann Haatha?" (Arabic for "Who's there?")

We leap towards the voices. Fearing and trembling, two Arabs are standing up against the wall of the building. They try to escape. I open fire. An ear piercing scream fills the air. One man falls to the ground, while his friend continues to run. Now we must act – we have no time to lose. We make our way from house to house as the Arabs scramble about in confusion. Machine guns rattle, their noise mixed with a terrible howling. We reach the main thoroughfare of the camp. The mob of fleeing Arabs grows larger. The other group attacks from the opposite direction. The thunder of hand grenades echoes in the distance. We receive an order to retreat. The attack has come to an end.

On the following morning, the headlines will read: "The refugee camp of Al-Burj near Gaza was attacked. The camp has been serving as a base for infiltrators into Israeli territory. Twenty people were killed and another twenty were wounded."

... A telephone line blocks our way. We cut it and continue. A narrow path leads along the slope of a hill. The column marches forward in silence. Stop! A few rocks roll down the hill. I catch sight of a man surveying the silence. I cock my rifle. Gibly crawls over to me, "Har, for God's sake, a knife!!" His clenched teeth glitter in the dark and his whole body is tight, his mind alert, "For God's sake," ... I put my tommy down and unsheath my machete. We crawl towards the lone figure as he begins to sing a trilled Arab tune. Soon the singing will turn into a death moan. I am shaking, every muscle in my body is tense. This is my first experience with this type of weapon. Will I be able to do it?

We draw closer. There he stands, only a few meters in front of us. We leap. Gibly grabs him and I plunge the knife deep into his back. The blood pours over his striped cotton shirt. With not a second to lose, I react instinctively and stab him again. The body groans, struggles and then becomes quiet and still.

From an interview with Meir Har-Tzion, *Ha'aretz* weekly supplement, 9 November 1965:

"Pangs of conscience? No. Why should I have any?" The man's blue eyes open wide in amazement. "It's easy to kill a man with a rifle. You press the trigger and that's that. But a knife, why, that's something else – that's a real fight. Even if you are successful, you come close to death. The enemy's blade is as close as the air. It's a fantastic feeling. You realize you're a man."

## APPENDIX 4

### The Lavon Affair

Moshe Sharett's public version of "The Lavon Affair" in his statement to Israel's Parliament (*Divrei Ha-Knesset*, the 514th meeting, 13 December 1954):

Honorable Chairman, members of the Knesset. The trial that started two days ago in Egypt against 13 Jews is disturbing everybody and brings about an emotional turmoil and deep bitterness in the country [Israel] and in the whole Jewish world. Indeed, it must cause concern and anxiety in the hearts of all justice-seeking people around the universe. The Committee for Foreign Affairs and Security has already dealt and will further deal with this serious issue. But at this stage I feel obliged to make a short announcement. In my speech in the Knesset on November 15 I said

"The uncontrolled behavior of Egypt ... does not indicate ... that its leadership ... is seeking moderate approaches and peace. How far Egypt is from this spirit [of moderation and peace] can be learned from the plot woven in Alexandria, the show-trial which is being organized there against a group of Jews who became victims of false accusations of espionage, and who, it seems, are being threatened and tortured in order to extract from them confessions in imaginary crimes."

This gloomy assumption was verified and was revealed to be a cruel and shocking fact, by the declaration of the accused Victorin Ninio in the military court in Cairo that was published this morning. [According to this declaration] she was tortured during the interrogation which preceded the trial and by that torture they extracted from her false confessions to crimes which did not happen. The government of Israel strongly protests this practice, which revives in the Middle East the methods used by the Inquisition in the Middle Ages. The government of Israel strongly rejects the false accusations of the general Egyptian prosecution, which relegates to the Israeli authorities horrible deeds and diabolic conspiracies against the security and the international relations of Egypt. From this stand we have protested many times in the past persecution and false accusations of Jews in various countries. We see in the innocent Jews accused by the Egyptian authorities of such severe crimes, victims of vicious hostility to the State of Israel and the Jewish people. If their crime is being Zionist and devoted to Israel, millions of Jews around the world share this crime. We do not think that the rulers of Egypt should be interested in being responsible for shedding Jewish blood. We call upon all those who believe in peace, stability and human relations among nations to prevent fatal injustice.

## APPENDIX 5

### Israeli Newspaper Reveals Government's Attempt to Stop Publication of *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*

Following are major excerpts from an article by Israeli Member of the Knesset Uri Avneri, published in *Haolam Haze*, September 23, 1980, entitled

#### "Sharett's Diary for the Arabs."

The son of the Prime-Minister of Israel is fighting the daughter of the Israeli Minister of Interior because of a book produced by an Arab organization.

This is no myth, it is happening in reality.

The story of this fight started a few months ago. At the time, it became known that the Association of Arab-American University Graduates was planning to publish a booklet based on the personal diary of Moshe Sharett, who was Israel's first Foreign Minister, and her second Prime Minister. The booklet was written by Livia Rokach, the daughter of Israel Rokach who served as the Minister of the Interior in Sharett's government.

Sharett's personal diary was edited by his son Yaqov ("Kova"). Upon the publication of such a blatant document, which revealed many of the most hidden secrets of the Ben Gurion-Sharett era, he realized that it was impossible to limit that information to the country's borders. Such an explosive material, that explores many of the most sacred myths of Israeli propaganda, was bound to have echoes in other countries. But Sharett the son resented the fact that the publication was done by an Arab organization.

With the help of the Israeli Foreign Office, which was headed by his father for eight years, Sharett hired a known American attorney, Martin Novak. This attorney contacted the Arab organization and demanded that it should cease the publication of the book on the claim that it injures the production rights and the economic interests of the family. Naturally, the attorney did not mention that ceasing publication was in the interest of the Israeli Foreign Office, since the book is liable to hurt badly Israeli propaganda in the world.

Upon the appearance of the booklet, Sharett the son requested to sue the producers. But to his disappointment, the Foreign Office did not uphold its support for him. **The Jerusalem politicians decided that pursuing a legal course in stopping the dissemination of the booklet would be a mistake of the first order, since it would give it much more publicity...**

The booklet uses quotations from Sharett's diary to illuminate eight affairs which took place during the fifties. Livia Rokach did clean work. All her quotations are real. She did not ever take them out of context, nor did she quote them in a way that contradicts the intention of the diary writer. To any person who is familiar with Israeli propaganda, such quotations may have a stunning effect ... Through the use of selective excerpts from Sharett's diary, her historical research deals in detail with the following affairs:

### **1. Retaliation activities**

Quotations from Sharett show that these activities were never carried out in revenge or retaliation, as they were presented to be, but that they were the product of the premeditated policies of David Ben Gurion and Moshe Dayan. These policies aimed at heating the borders, as a preparation for war, and as a pretext to vacate and disperse Palestinian refugees who lived in camps close to the borders. Quotations from Sharett's book also reveal that President Yitzhak Ben Zvi hoped for an Egyptian attack to justify Israel's occupation of half of Sinai. Sharett reveals, furthermore, that the incidents on the Syrian border were also a result of an Israeli initiative. Sharett details at length the reasons behind the blood-bath committed by the 101 unit, under the command of Arik Sharon, in the village of Kibya, where fifty-six innocent Arab villagers were killed. He also recites how the government decided to publish a false communique, in which this event was portrayed as a partisan action carried out by civilian "settlers."

### **2. The plan for the occupation of Southern Syria**

Sharett reveals that Ben Gurion, Dayan and Pinhas Lavon requested in February 1954 to exploit the toppling of the Syrian dictator, Adib Shishakly, by occupying southern Syria and annexing it to Israel. They also requested to buy a Syrian officer who would acquire power in Damascus and establish a pro-Israel puppet government. These things seem more actual today in light of the deteriorating position of Hafez al-Assad and Israeli declarations in this regard.

### **3. The intention to partition Lebanon**

Sharett reveals that already in February 1954 Ben Gurion proposed a large Israeli operation to dismember the Lebanese state and to establish a Maronite-Christian state in one of its parts. Extended discussions were held as a result. Ben Gurion explicated the plan at length in a letter to Sharett, and Sharett answered in a long letter in which he opposed the plan vehemently. Ben Gurion was ready to invest large sums in bribing Christian leaders in Lebanon. Sharett also revealed that the chief of staff supported the plan of buying a Lebanese army officer who would be used as a puppet, and who would make it seem that the intervention of the Israeli army would be in response to his call for the liberation of Lebanon from Muslim subjugation. In the eyes of today's reader this plan seems an accurate blueprint for what took place in Lebanon after that- the civil war, the establishment of the Maronite enclave of Major Sa'd Haddad and labeling it "free Lebanon."

#### **4. The Har-Tzion Affair**

Sharett recites how Meir Har-Tzion of the 101 Unit murdered with his own hands five innocent Bedouin youth in revenge for the killing of his sister who crossed the Jordanian border during one of her hikes. Sharett recites, further, how Arik Sharon and Moshe Dayan covered over this abhorrent act, and how Ben Gurion foiled his decision to bring Har-Tzion and his friends to justice.

#### **5. The Lavon Affair**

Sharett describes at length the nasty business in Egypt. Livia Rokach appended to the book in which Sharett reveals the truth about the affair his own lies-filled speech in the Knesset in which he claimed that the accusations against those indicted in the Cairo trials were motivated by blood libel and antisemitism.

The Israeli reader who read the excerpts from Sharett's diary which were serialized in Maariv, or even the eight volumes of the diary themselves cannot be shocked by these revelations, in spite of their severity. However, the impact of such a publication abroad is bound to be sharper. Indeed, the lack of legal intervention by the Israeli Foreign Office prevented a wide spread dissemination of the booklet. The Arab-American organization that published the booklet does not have the means required to disseminate it widely, especially when faced with the conspiracy of silence imposed by the pro-Israel American media ...

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First published in the United States of America by AAUG Press 1980,  
1982, 1986 by the Association of Arab-American University Graduates, Inc.  
Third Edition 1986.  
(AAUG information paper series: no. 23) ISBN 0-937694-70-3

**See also** *Ben-Gurion's Spy: The Story of the Political Scandal That Shaped Modern Israel*, by **Shabtai Teveth (1996)** on the **Lavon Affair**.  
*Moshe Sharett: Biography of a Political Moderate*, by **Gabriel Sheffer**, OUP, **1996**.